

# DormCon Minutes 5-11-17

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Meeting started at 7:35

## Attendance

Baker	1
BC	1
EC	1
Maseeh	1
McCormick	0
MacGregor	1
New	1
Next	1
Random	1
Senior House	1
Simmons	1

## Welcome New Officers!

Kenny, JudComm  
Sabrina, RMC  
Darius, RMC  
Joe, Dining  
Nonye, Housing  
Giana, Housing  
Lily, Dining  
Yuge, President  
Allie, VP  
Mayukha, Treasurer  
Max, Sec

# Dining Consultant Recommendations

(presented by Peter Cummings)

Peter: Hi! I work under Suzy Nelson, sets dining/housing rates, handles HR, finance, dining for Student Life.

A survey was conducted in first 2 weeks of March. Had a 31% response rate, fairly even across all years. Outside group helped conduct/review. These are 'topline' results. There will be a final report by the consultants at some point.

Eventually will have an RFP (Request for Proposal), which will be put out to potential bidders as a way to construct new dining contract. RFP will go out in the fall, then companies will be given until December to respond. Peter will decide on company February/March. Anticipates new contract July 1, 2018.

Data from the survey presented.

- Most important factors: nearby, fairly priced, fast, 'To-go', variety, custom, social, comfortable, dietary requirements, meal plan.

Isaac: Feels like questions are presupposing that I'm buying a meal and not making it myself ('able to order, receive, pay', 'purchase to go'). Didn't address that some will go farther to get to their own dorm to eat there.

Peter: We'll keep that in mind. Some of data about where you were at time versus where you eventually ate captures that.

- Least important: Organic, local, order in advance, off campus
- Most students eat lunch in Zone 7. The least amount of seats are there.

Isaac: again this is data about where people buy food, not where they eat

- 28.5% of dining students skip lunch. Only 9% of cook-for-yourself do. 40% of CFY purchase lunch,  $\frac{1}{3}$  eat something prepared at home.

Next: eat big breakfast, early dinner, don't feel necessity to eat during traditional lunchtime

Allie: Low cost is a priority for Cook For Yourself communities. \$6-10 for lunch is going to add up. Not sure that adding more options will mean more people eat.

Joe: Maseeh skips breakfast, goes to east campus, come back for lunch at Maseeh. Not as much in other dorms. Maseeh has mandatory full 19.

- In the evening, dining plan holders shift back to the west side but a majority of students are still in Zone 7 (including grad students).

Nonye: what about students who live in CFY but have meal plans?

Kate: CFY means people who live in a CFY dorm (not are not on meal plan), so they're included with that data.

- Of meal plan holders, 59% would like east side lunch option (grab and go), 58% want dining dollars (retail, a la carte).
- 40% said 24-hr dining would be good in zone 7.
- Those who eat off campus do so primarily for quality
- Top factors: walking distance, fair price
- Walker
  - Thinking about activating Pritchett Lounge 6pm to 12am or 1am.
  - Would be like a cafe (not necessarily a grill - can't retouch Walker in terms of equipment)
  - Would like to get going for the fall, have open on weekdays
- CFY have expressed need for grocery.
- CFY would be interested in smaller block plans, dining/lunch only, plans that don't expire on weekly basis.
- House Dining students interested in hybrid with Dining Dollars, unlimited access, eliminating Maseeh's 19-meal requirement, and would pay more to have a 24/7 dining location.
- Options that will be tested in next year:
  - Grab and go for lunch only
  - 24/7 venue with Market proposed for other side of Main St (quicker and faster than a dining hall)

Discussion:

Question: dining dollars might cost more than current dining scheme? How much?

Peter: Unsure, would test. Flexibility equates to cost.

Rob: will we get these presentation slides?

Peter: yep, they can be sent out. 'Face value' responses to each question will be posted online as well.

Nonye: instead of 24/7, could extend current hours? Add flexibility of meal swipes not expiring?

Peter: going to test fit concept of meals not expiring.

Billy: on weekends, staggered hours for dining halls?

Peter: yep, we've heard that weekend brunch hours are a problem.

Isaac: what about those who've tried out and decided meal plan doesn't work? Can get meal plan for shorter amounts of time?

Peter: less is difficult. Changing in November to less is hard. Bon Appetit plans their budget around certain number of participants. Fluctuations would be difficult, would come out in price.

Kate: shouldn't be too hard to adjust budget down each month?

Peter: there's more lag time in their ability to react to that.

Isaac: Should we look into a different provider model? It seems like current model has high fixed cost, so it can't work if there aren't a ton of people.

Peter: yes, there is a high fixed cost. The model walks the balance of having enough participation to support dining halls. Alternative model that is less mandatory becomes more of a restaurant feel. Number of entrees would shrink. The goal is to create additional value for current dining plan holders to preserve the value of their plan but respond to concerns over value and flexibility. At same time, also want to appeal to more students, including possibly CFY. Hoping to add flexibility without drastic price increases.

Lily: Considered self-operations? Also, will MIT be accepting bid from Aramark?

Peter: Have not been talking about going to self-op. Students and administration are preparing questions to ask any contractor about their social justice issues. Sodexo, Compass also have issues. Have to be open to understanding how they're dealing with it. Undergoing review process.

Next: for a market/grocery, opening up public kitchen space to quickly prepare and eat?

Peter: good suggestion. Could factor that into a pantry option. Does need some level of oversight (cleanliness, equipment upkeep).

Yuge: did you account for food trucks?

Peter: don't have that data

Yuge: so Stata was probably larger.

Yuge: was there interest in improving quality in existing locations?

Peter: Room for big improvement on second floor. Not touching Anna's or Dunkin.

Sarah: Students likely more interested in more local, interesting venues on 2nd floor.

Peter: Aramark used to have master contract of entire campus. Early 2000s, brought in everyone else. Kept price down, but quality less and managing more difficult. Considering finding a company that can work with local venues.

Sarah: about pantry service - we kind of have that with La Verde's, and it's not serving students' needs and the prices are always increasing. Can we get a guarantee that would be affordable, on par with normal grocery store? Could we change model in student center too?

Peter: Yes. Pantry has to be less formal than Verdes. Has to be local market, not chain store. Hope for Verdes, probably for after all our graduations: create a satellite of store in Kendall square in the stud.

Sarah: Kendall grocery undecided - really important to think about affordability. Concerned about pushing model of gentrification in Cambridge.

Yuge: it's been an hour, cutting off! Send questions to Yuge and Allie, who will forward to Peter.

## Housing Chair Updates

- Storage insurance due May 19!
- Want storage open until graduation? Need storage chairs to talk to house managers. Senior Haus manager has already okayed, can talk to them if need assistance convincing your house manager.
- The security committee is also happening.
- List of recommended venues for dorms without storage will also be sent out.

## Budget Discussion and Vote

Budget presented. Going to vote tonight.

Also going to talk about how allocate REX - split evenly? Split by residents? Split by events?

This year's events budget is +\$5000 rollover from Steer Roast's cancellation.

Allie: fall events budget (\$15000) kind of large. Maybe send to REX?

Sabrina: good to roll over some events budget to Spring, we were going to have more requests than budget this year.

Emily: New House could use more REX funding.

- 4 houses staying, 1 occupying brown stone/becoming ILG, other 4 scattered
- \$4k goes to all of new house REX -- gets mostly divided evenly between houses. New House is losing  $\frac{2}{3}$  of house taxes from students leaving, and those houses would have to request from their host dorms. Bad situation of stepping on each other's toes. Would it be possible to designate external funds for New House?

Discussion of how dorms handle house tax.

- Displaced new house residents will pay house taxes for their new dorms, and could also request money from said dorm.
- New house residents staying would still have same house taxes, but New House will have smaller total next year.

Lily: how much does this group need?

Emily: New spends 4k in total, a portion is for dorm-wide, and then the rest is divided evenly between all houses (~\$400 per house). New house is also getting funds from admin, but will be short ~\$1500 this year.

Yuge: reallocate \$2k from events to REX for New?

Budget Change: REX is \$5500, Events is \$13k, New House Displacement REX is \$2k.

Other budget proposals:

- Should REX budget as a whole increase?
  - Last fall events budget: Next Haunt, FredFest, Bad Ideas, Simmons/Next Formal, McCormick Carnival, Burns Supper. Didn't quite spend all \$10k.
  - Yuge: value in having larger events budget.
- Can the budget be spent on capital improvements?
  - Would have to be very inter-dorm, since this is DormCon. Hopefully for more community-development focus. Like joint makerspace. Could maybe set this aside for a specific thing?

Not going to raise REX budget. Saving money for more events/flexibility.

VOTE - Budget passes!

## REX Distribution

Should we switch to distributing funds by population instead of equally to each dorm?

- This matters more for smaller dorms who don't spend as much, does not have a large effect on larger dorms.
  - Rob: Consider distribution based on freshmen intake?
  - Smaller dorms want more money, if anything, to get people interested.
- Isaac: Dormcon takes money in order to ensure people put money into REX. Worried about residents not getting money back fairly. \$2 that every individual puts in should go back to the dorms that they're from.
  - Allie: Random would get a lot less.
- Sarah: We want every dorm to have the best possible events. REX is about MIT and experiencing all dorms fully. Easy to achieve that with an equal distribution.
  - Allie: EC would benefit from directly getting back, but would rather fair distribution so Random has enough money to hold good REX.
  - Next: Seconded, helps frosh understand dorms and make better decision.

VOTE - equal distribution passes.

## Committee on Sexual Misconduct, Prevention, and Response Rep

Yuge: presidents comfortable confirming someone to committee at this meeting, or want more time?

Emma (BC pres) would like to be representative to committee.

Drawbacks to not confirming: representative mght miss first meeting.

Straw poll: 8 for choosing now. 0 for delaying

No one nominated other than Emma.

VOTE - Emma approved.