

ALPHA THETA CHAPTER OF SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY, INC.

Alpha Theta Chapter
founded 1882

M.I.T.
founded 1861

March 26, 2006

Minutes of the Board of Director Meeting of the Alpha Theta Chapter of Sigma Chi Fraternity, Inc. held February 13, 2006.

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 PM in the Chapter House Library.

ROLL

Present - 10 of 15 Board Members

Alumni Board Members – 5 of 8

- Karl Büttner '87, President of the Corporation
- Josh Littlefield '81, Treasurer of the Corporation
- Daniel Craig '03, Clerk of the Corporation
- Adam D'Amico '99, Chapter Advisor
- Herb Mower '65, Alumni Risk Manger
- Jay Krone '74, Board Member

Undergraduate Board Members – 5 of 7

- Brian Wilt '07, Consul
- Nick Haschka '08, Quaestor
- Josh Lake '07 and Jack Field '08, Co-House Managers
- Austin Ford '07, Magister
- Aman Luther '09, Board Representative
- Andrew Ji '09, Board Representative

Others

- Mark Curtiss '87
- Ryan Dean '08, Pro Consul
- Aman Milner, Resident Advisor

Absent – 5 of 15 Board Members

Alumni Board Members

- Mike Delaus '82
- Doug Bailey '72

Undergraduate Board Members

- Joe Sikoscow '06, G.Z.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Minutes of the November 11, 2005 meeting were accepted as distributed by e-mail, with two name spelling edits. Minutes of all previous meetings are available on the chapter website at <http://sigmachi.mit.edu>.

BOARD REPORTS

President – Karl Büttner

1. Contributions from alumni appear to be going very well this campaign year, roughly in line with this point last year.
2. On Jan 31, Herb and Karl attended the MIT Focus of the Future of FSILGs seminar. It was a chance for the various organizations at the institute to provide an update on the status of the FSILG community, both now and in the future, and to underscore the Institute's commitment to the FSILG system. Representatives from the Alumni Association, Alumni of Independent Living Groups (AILG), Inter Fraternity Council (IFC), Panhellenic Conference all spoke along with Bob Ferrara (MIT FSILG Alumni Relations) and Steve Immerman (MIT Sr. Assoc. Dean for Student Life). The slides from the presentations (and other updates from MIT regarding the FSILG community) will be made available online at <http://web.mit.edu/dsl/aurora/community-reports.htm>

Some highlights:

The AILG is planning to continue its accreditation process. This year, it aims to accredit three to five more houses and to follow up next year by accrediting all the houses on campus. They have recently streamlined the accreditation process and we should consider being a part of it this year so that we can fully take advantage of it during rush next year.

The FSILG Coop will soon be offering remote web server and database backup services to its members. For house like our own where we maintain extensive databases, this could be a very useful way to secure them.

While MIT President Susan Hockfield and the administration has come out very much in favor of FSILGs, there is no possibility in the foreseeable future of freshmen once again being allowed to move in, according to Steve Immerman's comments at the meeting.

There is a renewed effort, although in a very uncertain and early stage (currently working to just get the topic on the calendar for re-discussion), of exploring again the possibility of setting aside land in Cambridge for Boston and Brookline FSILGs to move to.

3. At the last meeting, it was decided that the annual Scholarship Dinner will be held during the semester. President Hockfield has been invited. While she has not replied yet, we think it is unlikely she will be able to join us this year (she and her family did join us last year, the week after her inauguration). When she does reply, we will choose the date. Possible dates include May 13 and May 20.
4. Since the Beaver Sig has been a great vehicle for alumni to stay informed about the chapter, it may be possible to post archives of the Beaver Sig online. Stewart Howe has electronic copies for many years and hard copies going back to 1980. Herb may have hard copies going back further than that. It would be inexpensive to obtain the electronic copies from Stewart Howe. Hiring them to scan their hard copies would cost more, but it would not be expensive to obtain the hard copies and scan them ourselves or possibly have it done at the FSILG Coop.

Treasurer – Josh Littlefield

1. Taxes have been filed.
2. Finances are in good shape. Josh has not seen the most recent deposits from donations, but they seem to be as Karl and Herb reported earlier.
3. The corporation has opened a new account at Fidelity for Capital Campaign expenses. Doug's generous donation was the initial deposit and it will be used to pay Charlie Frick, the fundraising consultant the corporation recently hired.
4. Spring rent is technically due now.
5. We have received the IRDF Operating Grant from FY04 for \$15,223. This does not account for the approximately \$6000 the chapter spent on new educational equipment in expectation of the Educational Operating Grant for FY05. New applications for FY05 have just been released.
6. MIT has recomputed the education area of the houses for the purpose of IRDF operating grants. The new calculation accounts for corridors and lobbies differently and has reduced the house's educational percentage from about 25% down to 13%, and is typical of the effect on other houses as well.
7. Herb reminded the board that the general fraternity has its own educational expenses fund, ours being the William Carlisle fund.
8. Karl reported that paperwork has been returned to the Los Alamos National Bank to affect the release of \$10,000 that John Ludsford '53 left to Alpha Theta in his will. The funds have not yet been received.

Alumni House Manager – Daniel Craig

1. Sprinkler improvements were made in January in accordance with the sprinkler inspections conducted in the fall. Sprinkler heads were added in the first floor foyer, 2LB, 3LB, and the bike room. Painted and damaged heads were replaced, as were obsolete gauges and signage, and a spare head box was installed next to the sprinkler main in the bike room. Only one gauge remains to replace, but it will require coordination with Phi Kaps and Theta Chi because the sprinkler main from the city side will need to be temporarily shut down.
2. Carbon Monoxide detectors will soon be required in residential buildings where combustion takes place. While the details are still somewhat uncertain, it will likely mean AC or battery powered detectors in the hallways outside bedrooms and detectors hardwired to the fire panel near devices that combust, such as the boiler, dryer, and stove. The FSILG Coop is exploring equipment and vendors so that houses can coordinate their upgrades. We have informed Chris Rezek at the Coop what we want to participate in this program.
3. The house has continued to have heating and plumbing problems that the undergraduate house managers have been dealing with.
4. American Alarm has been reporting again that one of the telephone lines used by the fire panel sporadically drops out of service. Verizon was called earlier in January, but the problem seems to persist. They will be called again and if there is nothing wrong with the phone lines, then we will need to call American Alarm to see if the problem could be inside their own box.
5. Jack and Danny attended the AILG's House Managers 101 two-day seminar over IAP. It was a very informative event. A few highlights:

The Coop has begun the "document registry" for important documents related to house

licenses, maintenance, and other issues. We have sent them some of our required documents and are in the process of finding the remainders.

The Coop, which can be used to pay vendors for repairs and maintenance, can also be used to pay regular utility bills. We should seriously look into this as a way to relieve burden from the Quaestor and to assure that the bills are paid on time.

Apparently, Cambridge and Boston may soon be requiring a food safety certification of someone responsible for meals at houses. This could be an undergraduate or a hired chef. At the meeting, only one Cambridge inspection official spoke, so it is unclear how Boston will be handling this, but we should be aware that food cleanliness and inspections could be an issue in the future.

CHAPTER REPORTS

Consul – Brian Wilt

1. On February 4, the chapter initiated nine new members in a well run I week.
2. There are now 24 people living in the house, including the resident advisor. Next year, it is likely that the number will increase to 26.
3. Brian conducted an informal straw poll to gauge how brothers felt about the number of members the chapter had. Most people seemed happy with its current size.
4. Delta Upsilon had a distressing incident with Boston Police at their DOTW night the previous Thursday. Apparently two police officers in plain clothes came to the door and did not identify themselves as police. When the president of DU, who was working door at the time, turned the officers away, after some argument, identified themselves and demanded to search the house for alcohol. After they searched the house and did not find any, they demanded to see the dormitory and inspections certificates. One of these had expired and its renewal was pending the approval of some sprinkler work being performed at the house. The officers then ordered everyone out of the house at midnight because of the expired certificate. The next day, DU renewed their certificate and moved back in.

DU had been following all the IFC procedures, including ID checking and wristbanding, and so there is no investigation from IFC or MIT. There was one poorly written and poorly fact-checked article about the incident in the Boston Herald. More details will probably emerge at the upcoming Presidents' Council.

5. The Newly Initiated Brothers will be having moxie and ice cream at Herb's next Saturday.
6. Rush Retreat will be held at Applebrook on March 10-12.
7. Campus Preview Weekend will be on April 6-9.
8. Elections will be held on May 12.

Magister – Austin Ford

1. Initiation went very well, thanks to strong participation of both actives and alumni.
2. One of the new initiates was joined by his four cousins, who were all brothers of the Indiana chapter.

Quaestor – Nick Haschka

1. Housebills are in the process of being distributed. Brothers living in the house have received them, brothers outside the house have not.
2. Nick reported that the first round of tax paperwork has been filed.
3. Nick is working with Josh Littlefield to settle up with the corporation.
4. The chapter appears to have a cash flow problem. Nick has lots of reimbursement checks to distribute, but not enough cash to cover them. There is only about \$4,000 in savings at the moment, although \$10,000 was deposited today for some spring housebills. In the fall, the chapter spent \$6,000 on educational equipment which it expects to be reimbursed for by IRDF, but this has yet to take place. There are some past housebills due, in particular by some recent alumni. These will need to be collected in order to have sufficient funds to operate. However, some of this is clouded by accounting errors and the books may not fully reflect what some brothers have paid.
5. At the AILG course Treasurers 101, they strongly recommended a company called Omega Financial that can be used to manage both current and overdue bill collection in return for a 1-2% fee. Nick is exploring this as an option for the chapter. The service is similar to what Jay Krone's son's chapter uses, provided by a firm called GreekBill.com.
6. Herb spoke strongly about the need to collect on overdue housebills because the chapter is not just a fraternity, but also a business. We should take full advantage of MIT's policy of withholding diplomas from brothers who have not paid their bills.

House Manager – Jack Field and Josh Lake

1. There is a large list of physical plant issues with the house:
2. On the 0 floor, the kitchen sink had broken and was leaking. The fixtures were replaced, but broke the next day. They were fixed a second time, but they are still leaking.
3. The toilet on the 0 floor is out of service because the ball broke. While this is a simple repair, the shutoff valve for the toilet leaks when it is closed, making the repair more difficult.
4. The drain pipes in the serving room leak, especially when the garbage disposal is run.
5. One of the toilets on the second floor is not working.
6. The third floor urinal overflows if used often, which happens during parties. This is the same urinal that was replaced over workweek at considerable expense.
7. The fourth floor urinal runs continuously unless the valve is struck hard.
8. The heating system is limping along. Everyday someone has to jump start the one functioning boiler. The heat exchangers on the first floor and zero floors do not deliver enough heat to keep them above 55 degrees. None of the fan coils work, and the vestibule heater has not worked since its pipes froze a year ago.
9. A repairman from DeMella came to work on the boilers, but he was too large to fit in the tight spaces in the boiler room and did not repair the second boiler. At this point, none of the vendors on the Coop list have provided adequate service, and several have refused to even try. The house needs a new HVAC specialist to repair the system so that it is at least minimally functional.
10. The front door lock occasionally gets stuck and does not latch when the door is closed.
11. The Coke machine was replaced with a leased machine from Coca-Cola.

Pro Consul – Ryan Dean

1. The newly initiated brothers have had their first Post-Initiation Training meeting.

BUSINESS

Capital Campaign – Karl Büttner (for Doug Bailey)

1. Doug is still chairman of the capital campaign committee, but was unable to attend tonight because he underwent minor knee surgery today.
2. Several members of the board met with Charlie Frick, the newly hired fundraising consultant for the “feasibility study” phase of the campaign. He will be meeting with a number of alumni in different cities over the next five to six months as part of conducting the feasibility study. By summer, he will wrap up the study and provide the corporation with a report which will be used to make the go/no go decision in the fall. Assuming a go decision is made, the early phase of the actual campaign will then begin, with the public kickoff of the campaign planned for the 125th reunion in 2007.
3. The plan is still to raise enough to cover a major renovation, plus – hopefully – an endowment to help pay for continuing maintenance.

125th Reunion Planning – Karl Büttner

1. Previous reunions have traditionally been held over Patriot’s Day weekend, which in 2007 will fall on April 13-16. The Cambridge Marriot has been tentatively reserved for this date.
2. John Piotti ’83, who has organized or heavily assisted in organizing the 100th, 105th, and 120th reunions, has graciously offered to again organize the 125th. Jay moved to nominate John, followed by a second from Herb. The motion carried unanimously, naming John Piotti the 125th Reunion Coordinator.
3. Brian Wilt was elected at the previous chapter elections as Undergraduate Coordinator, pending discussion with John Piotti and mutual agreement of roles and responsibilities.

House Rent – Karl Büttner

1. The corporation, which owns the house, charges the chapter rent in order to cover maintenance, taxes, and other costs associated with the facilities. Although the corporation’s financial standing has improved slowly and steadily over the past few years, it is still in need of significant additional strengthening. It receives income from two sources, alumni donations and rent. Annual alumni donations have been quite strong in recent years and likely cannot be expected to increase substantially more. Thus, the burden will fall on the chapter in the form of increased rent.
2. Karl proposed appointing a “Rent Taskforce” to examine rent increases. While rent will need to be raised, it should remain competitive with other houses and dorms. The taskforce will acquire this data from MIT, IFC, AILG, etc, and provide an analysis for the next board meeting, where rent for next year will be set.
3. Karl nominated Josh Littlefield to head the task force, with Quaestor Nick Haschka assisting. Nick also nominated his Assistant Quaestor Doug Hackett to join as well.

Work Week 2006

1. Workweek manager Nick Haschka will work with Danny to put together a workweek proposal for the April board meeting. The proposed task list will account for many of the

periodic maintenance items that have not been performed in some time. A list of such tasks was distributed by architect Mark Landsburg at the House Managers 101 seminar.

2. Other possible projects include:
 - a. Resealing the back door
 - b. Adjusting the carpet on the stairs
 - c. Replacing broken or missing balusters

Spring Rush

1. The house has no plans for a formal spring rush.

Upcoming Dates

Upcoming board meetings for the next year will be:

April 3, 2006 (rescheduled, originally set on April 10)
September 18, 2006
November 13, 2006

There is an AILG breakfast on Thursday, February 16, 2005 from 7-9 AM at Twenty Chimneys in W20.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Daniel R. Craig, Class of 2003
Corporate Clerk