

**737 Comstock Avenue Inc. (a.k.a. House Corp.)**

**Meeting Minutes**

**October 24, 2015**

**Syracuse, NY**

**Alumni Brothers in Attendance**

Hank Suominen (Board President and Treasurer), Bill Gerbig (Board Secretary), Stephen Oliva (Board Member), John Trop (Board Member), Mike Yates (Board Member), Brad Short (Board Member), Phil Oldham, John Predmore (Grand Praetor), Mike Little, Dan Davidson, Alan Bishop, Connor Wilson, Keegan Slattery (Board Member, by phone)

**Undergraduate Brothers in Attendance**

Hunter Viscarello (Consul), Brett Polinsky (Pro Consul), Dante Sesti, Joseph Leem (Quaester), Jared Huston (House Manager)

**ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS**

Hank opened the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

**Election of Board of Directors:**

Hank introduced four candidates that are up for re-election for a three year term ending November 2017, all endorsed by the Board of Directors. They are Brad Short, Bill Gerbig, Steve Oliva, and Evan Monahan. Evan declined re-election.

Connor Wilson was introduced as a candidate who had expressed interest in joining the House Corporation. Connor currently resides in New York City and held several offices as an undergrad. He was initiated in Spring of 2012, would like to stay involved with the Chapter, and would like to bridge some of the generation and communication gap between House Corporation and the Undergrads.

Mike Yates moved to accept all candidates, Dan Davidson seconded, and all were elected unanimously.

With no more business, Brad Short moved to close the Members Meeting, Mike Yates seconded, and all were in favor.

**HOUSE CORPORATION MEETING**

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Hank opened the meeting

**Election of Officers:**

Hank asked for nominations for the four offices – President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. With no new nominations, Brad Short moved to nominate all current officers, and Mike Yates seconded. All were in favor, and all officers were re-elected unanimously:

Hank Suominen – President and Treasurer

John Bersani – Vice President

Bill Gerbig – Secretary

**Alumni Liaisons:**

The following Alumni Liaison positions have been created:

Fundraising

Scholarship

Webmaster

Alumni Newsletter

Chapter Events

Ritual

Career Development

Capital Projects

Phil Oldham is our current Alumni Newsletter Liaison. The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the newsletter has been sent.

John Bersani and Bill Beach are working on Scholarship. They pledged through Hank to get scholarships ready for the Spring Semester.

The website was discussed. It's been a struggle to get undergrad content on the website, and to get undergrad profiles updated. Hunter expressed that the undergrads are finding our current website difficult to navigate compared to the previous site. Hank suggested that the undergrads appoint someone with a good IT background and social media expertise to serve as a coach for the rest of the undergrads, since the website is our primary source for capturing information and communicating with each other, and there are no plans for a major change to the current site. Connor Wilson volunteered for the Alumni Liaison role and agreed to work with whoever is appointed by the undergrads to facilitate.

John Trop is our current Alumni Events Liaison, and Dante Sesti is the undergraduate representative for Alumni Events. Their effort has been good, and Hank asked that they continue in those roles for the rest of the academic year. They agreed.

The role of Ritual Liaison has not been filled. This individual should work with the Magister and the rest of the Chapter on the context of what initiation is supposed to be in terms of meaning and execution. Execution includes set up, props, lighting, production, cleanup and storage, making sure people memorize their lines, etc. No one has volunteered for this role yet, but John Predmore offered his support.

Career Development is a great opportunity for Undergrads and others to take advantage of the many Alumni contacts. With little effort, this could be a great resource for Undergrads looking to find internships and full-time employment. Phil Oldham explained that it starts with a database of alums that includes professional and contact information, and can start long before senior year. Psi Psi's Facebook and Linked In pages are both potential resources. Phil is in regular contact with the New York City Alumni Chapter, and we have the opportunity to tap into that database as well with 8000 Sigma Chis in the New York City area. Hank asked the Chapter to select an undergrad to serve as liaison. Hunter agreed that the Chapter would select a representative.

**Capital Project update:**

Our goal is to improve one room per year in the basement.

The electrical system is an issue that will need to be addressed eventually. The electrical service in the house 200 amps, which is not adequate for a house this size. This project will take some engineering, and will have to be addressed in parts – maybe one floor per year. We currently have some 1930's vintage wiring, but it's safe. The estimated cost for the entire project is \$85,000.

The fire escape needs to be secured. There have been numerous security issues around campus lately and our fire escape presents a security risk. Hank promised that it will be fixed.

A new dishwasher has been purchased and installed.

The laundry room was upgraded over the summer. Coin operators were removed and machines were serviced. They are still not working very well and may need to be replaced next summer.

Room 204 was gutted to the frame, spray foam insulated, and a new rubber membrane roof was installed. After 40 years of leaking, it is now leak free.

There is a leak in the basement that needs to be fixed. Humidifiers were added, but some didn't have condensate pumps. It is drier, but there is more work to do.

The chimney needs to be inspected and fixed – Jim said he would work on it. Steve Oliva knows someone who can resolve this if Jim is unsuccessful.

The parking lot has been seal coated and spaces were painted and numbered. Hank had a property survey done and thinks we can squeeze in another 4 spaces. Maybe the driveway could be widened, and all agreed that this would be a good idea. Cars parked in the driveway create issues, especially in the winter.

Kitchen equipment is due to be replaced soon – freezers and refrigerators.

Most of our successful fundraising comes from people who visit the house, like what they see, and decide to make a contribution. Therefore, we need to continue to address necessary improvements, and the undergrads need to keep the house presentable to visitors. Jim and Lisa have been happy with the Chapter's post-party clean up. If all they need to do is base cleaning, they'll be happy. If the undergrads keep that up, the back charges for excessive cleaning will stop.

**General Discussion:**

The undergrads asked for better weekend meals, primarily Saturday dinner. Hank reminded them that board club is a 12 meal plan with made-to-order breakfast, and Saturday night dinner is not included, so whatever is prepared for them is a bonus. The undergrads agreed to discuss this directly with John to either improve Saturday dinner or eliminate it.

Hank reminded the undergrads that the cardboard dumpster is not to be used for general trash. When it gets filled with trash, it causes extra labor.

There have been issues with bathroom trash cans getting borrowed for use elsewhere in the house. When that happens, toilets get clogged with paper towels. The Chapter agreed to address this issue.

The single back bathroom on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor has been leaking down to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. It's not currently being used and will be looked at over winter break. It has something to do with the piping, according to Jim.

Hank reminded the Chapter to enter service requests through the website so that Jim is fully informed, Hank is aware, and he can then talk to Jim and Lisa to make sure everything gets addressed.

Mike Yates reported that the Alumni Association's current balance from contributions is about \$14,000. Possible uses of those funds, including scholarships, were discussed, but no decisions were made. Hank proposed that ritual gear would be a good place to invest some of those funds with matching funds from the Chapter.

John Trop announced that he is collecting \$30 per person for Homecoming and asked that everyone help him collect funds. 3 people pre-paid.

The Fire Department was called recently due to a smoke alarm and Hunter met with them. They thought they smelled smoke coming from the laundry room, but Hunter didn't think so and couldn't find any evidence. We have not been charged. A previous charge for a fire alarm pull has been paid by the person responsible. The charges for cleanup from last semester's incident with fire extinguishers have also been paid.

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On behalf of Sigma Chi National, John Predmore congratulated the Chapter and House Corporation on our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He reminded the undergrads that the House Corporation works hard to maintain the property and they need to take care of the chapter house as they would their own. John represented our Alumni Chapter at Grand Chapter in June in San Diego. The Alumni of the Chapter have supported the Bell Challenge Chapter which supports extra programming. In Province news, John is currently working with Hobart and SUNY Binghamton on new chapter installations. He also congratulated the undergrads on their Peterson Award, and noting that we went from possible suspension to Most Improved Chapter to a Peterson Award. He suggested that the Alumni Chapter could use some of their funds to sponsor travel to Balfour next summer. BLTW is expected to take place in Bowling Green again. The undergrads agreed that once they figure out who wants to attend, they will put a budget together and apply for funds from the Alumni Association.

Phil Oldham reported from the NYC Alumni Chapter is trying to find better ways to identify and connect with Undergrads and Alumni primarily for job hunting connections. He also said that Hobart and Syracuse are among the top 10 Alumni populations in the NYC area. Phil is working closely with the Hobart Alumni Association on how to build their connections. John reported that National has a goal of promoting better Alumni relations between chapters.

Brett Polinsky reported that Mike Greenberg is visiting Syracuse in February. John Predmore reminded everyone that Mike fought for us when we were being considered for suspension, and he should be welcomed. He's coming to see how we have progressed. February 27<sup>th</sup> is the date. There was some discussion about scheduling an event during Mike's visit that would include Alumni. No final decisions were made, but the undergrads agreed to work with the Alumni Association and House Corporation on this. With two active chapters in Rochester, plus Cornell and the colonies (Binghamton and Hobart), the event should be well attended. John asked for help planning the event, and Hunter pledged the Chapter's support.

Brad Short moved for adjournment, and Mike Yates seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

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*William Gerbig*

Secretary