



AILG Plenary Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 18, 2021 | Zoom | Meeting called to order at 6:05 by Akil Middleton

In Attendance

FSILGs attending: Alpha Chi Omega, Alpha Delta Phi, Alpha Epsilon Pi, Alpha Phi, Beta Theta Pi, Chi Phi, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Delta Tau Delta, Epsilon Theta, Fenway House, Kappa Sigma, Lambda Chi Alpha, Nu Delta, Phi Beta Epsilon, Phi Delta Theta, Phi Kappa Theta, Phi Sigma Kappa, Pi Beta Phi, pika, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Tau Epsilon Phi, Theta Chi, Theta Delta Chi, Theta Tau, WILG, Zeta Beta Tau, Zeta Psi

FSILGs not attending: Alpha Epsilon Phi, Alpha Tau Omega, Delta Phi Epsilon, Kappa Alpha Theta, Number Six Club, Phi Kappa Sigma, Pi Lambda Phi, Sigma Chi, Sigma Kappa, Sigma Nu, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Student House, Theta Xi,

AILG Board: Akil Middleton, Eric Cigan, Tyler Kemp-Benedict, Cecilia Stuopis

MIT Administration and Other Guests: Brad Badgley (FSILG Office), Bob Ferrara, Pam Gannon (DSL), Liz Jason (FSILG Office), Scott Klemm (FCI), Patrick McCabe, Joshua Schuler (FCI/BSF), Tom Stohlman (AILG Facilities),

Welcome and Introductions

Akil Middleton convened the meeting at 6:05. Expect a streamlined meeting.

Treasurer's Update and Financial Report

Eric Cigan – The financial reports are posted at <https://ailg.mit.edu/about/plenary>: you can find the [balance sheet](#) and the [budget and actuals](#) there. Here are a few comments to accompany the reports.

- The balance sheet is typical - the only notable item here is the accounts receivable amount, which reflects the amount that we will be reimbursed from IRDF for paying the management costs for the Facilities Renewal program. We are acting as a channel for this expense, so we get money in from IRDF and pay the same amount out to the contractor, C&H.
- The profit & loss statement is also unremarkable at this point. We've received all budgeted income, and on the expense side, we continue to pay monthly amounts for BSF and SLI support to FCI. What's notable is that you see the \$7,988 expense for **5305 - Facilities Renewal expense** as a new line in expenses.

You see that we are over budget on **5523 - Administration** now. That is because when AILG invoices FCI for member dues, BSF and SLI support, SLI charges a small collection fee. In the budget, that cost was included in the BSF and SLI budgets; it should have been put in the 5523 - Administration category. This became more noticeable this month because the cost of our tax preparation (\$525) came in as well. In future years, we should put FCI's fee in the Administration category and budget accordingly.

FSILG Office and Council Update

Brad – Thursday, Dec 9 is the last day of classes, a week earlier than usual. Finals are Dec 13–17.

Student elections are happening now and going well. We always encourage alums to be in communication with their chapters about these transitions.

The FSILG Office is organizing a retreat in February as they typically do, focusing on the role transitions from the outgoing to the newly elected student officers.

In partnership with the AILG Facilities Committee and FCI, the FSILG Office is also working on – in addition to the usual hour-long training for student house managers each semester – a supplemental safety-focused walk-through with the BSF (Josh Schuler) and/or Scott Klemm with the newly elected HM along with an alum representative, of their house and facilities.

We'll send a reminder message about winter IAP expectations, and as usual, ask house corporations who will be the point of contact (since the contact may be different from usual over holidays).

Peer Visit Program Update

Roy Russell – [PVP committee co-chair] ML Peters couldn't join this call, but we wanted to let people know, we're starting up the peer visits. Two fraternity chapters, Beta Theta Pi and Kappa Sig, are happy to participate in a couple of pilot visits. We hope to add an ILG and a sorority. Pilots are no different from a regular peer visit, but we may tweak the questionnaire or procedures based on early experience.

All the new PVP documents have been shared in Google documents and are available for commenting. We welcome comments added right into those documents. The questionnaire is at:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wZVBhmcGT7LDEa9xOF-RQizkUWzX7_0uK0tjpxZrVro/

We have a few volunteers for the visiting teams. If you've done it before, it would be similar, but for now over Zoom. Scheduling should be easier than for in-person meetings. We expect a call of 1–1.5 hour.

We're close to ready to send out an email with details, asking volunteers to find an agreeable time. The meetings could happen any time that works (sooner than late spring is fine, if that works).

To read more about the PVP goals: <https://ailg.mit.edu/committees/peer-visit-program-committee>

Akil – Thanks to this committee, for re-envisioning what used to be accreditation, and getting it back on its feet after the pandemic slowed everything down.

Review of Facilities Renewal Committee

Pam – This committee was started as an ad-hoc group in 2018, following the facilities assessments, to help organizations deal with some items that were frequently identified on those assessment reports. The process was put on hold (by the pandemic) just as it had been getting under way in spring 2020, and now it is resuming.

The goal is to make it easy and affordable to do this needed work, by doing it as community-wide projects, with a focus on life safety. We're hiring a professional property manager to oversee and coordinate the projects. It's a very "joint" committee, with members from DSL/FSILG, IRDF, FCI, and AILG.

Bob – As we've done successfully at other times, we will coordinate the work centrally, because it's easier to get one contractor and invite people to jump in. Among previous projects that went well using this model, the biggest is probably the MIT fiber optic installation. Contracting just once also makes the financing simpler. The IRDF will pay upfront in this case (the current project is focused on egress, specifically doors and door hardware) and then be reimbursed by the houses for their share. (The IRDF may not pay upfront for future phases: fire alarms systems and sprinkler systems.)

Tom Stohlman – The facilities assessment a few years ago found some common problems among many of the FSILG facilities, specifically:

- Doors and door hardware
- Fire alarm systems
- Sprinkler systems (in some cases, it's been decades since a major update)

The cheapest of these, to start with, is doors and door hardware. Just before COVID, the committee defined a scope of work and hired a project manager, tried the procedure out on three houses, and had a community meeting to discuss what we'd discovered from the pilot houses. Now all the houses are being reviewed by the same consultant, checking the doors on egress pathways. The consultant is identifying a list of improvements, and more urgent, code violations. Once that's done, hopefully soon, we'll offer other houses the opportunity to "step up to the counter" and join the project. Each house will get a report with a detailed spreadsheet, to help understand scope and costs before proceeding to get things fixed.

In the report, the costs will be separated into two priority levels:

1. Most urgent/necessary (e.g., code violations)
2. Less urgent/optional – not code requirements, but good proposed improvements

The cost numbers are estimates, and costs will vary – for example, it would not be surprising for one of the larger facilities, like WILG, to have a higher estimate – but most houses will probably see an estimate of ~\$22K total (on average). Since the IRDF will cover 75%, the cost to the house will be ~\$5K (on average) to address both sets of priorities. The IRDF is prepared to deal with higher costs, and part of the purpose of the pilot phase is to see how closely the estimates match the actual cost.

Pam – The IRDF is completely funding the expense of the project manager (passing the cost through AILG, Inc., which is technically making the contract). The IRDF is also completely funding the surveys for every house. For the actual physical work on the houses, the IRDF will cover at the standard safety percentage of 75%, with the house being billed for their 25% share.

[Slides from this segment on Facilities Renewal are posted on the AILG website at

<https://ailg.mit.edu/sites/default/files/documents/2021-11-18%20Facilities%20Renewal%20-%20AILG%20Plenary%20copy.pdf> See the slide labeled FLIP Phase 1: Doors and Egress, for a flow chart of the process.]

Two contractors will probably be hired – hardware, and carpentry. The work will be inspected to make sure it was done as expected. If your house recently completed work that would have been eligible for this project, please save receipts to submit as part of your organization's next EOG application.

The surveys are about 80% complete. We are currently piloting the work to help inform the future process with the rest of the houses. If your house is anxious to be part of the pilot, please contact Pam. There will be time for each house to review their report and ask questions.

Tom S (in response to a question about whether "code" refers to city-specific requirements or a more universal standard) – The priority 1 items refer to a state code. (Cities should not have their own different codes, though they sometimes try to sneak in things that seem to function as building codes.)

Pam – This project does NOT address the exterior historic doors as part of this. That would be separate work, separate cost.

Pam – We're not seeing a lot of door replacements required, it's mostly hardware that needs repair or replacing.

Josh – What we are seeing a lot of is problems with excessive wear & tear – removal of doors, (creative) attempts to repair... etc.

Pam – Houses that want to lock a lot of doors may need to re-do their egress diagrams/paths. That would be done on an ad-hoc 1:1 basis.

If a house chooses to have these contractors do additional work at the same time, if it is safety-related, that could be included under the same terms. But because the scope of this project covers an expansive number of doors, it's likely that work on additional doors would NOT be eligible. In that case, when it's not eligible for the IRDF subsidy, then the house/chapter would cover that additional cost entirely.

Pam – The project has been approved by the VP of Finance, and by DSL, so we have the OK to move forward.

Houses will be hearing from the Facilities Renewal committee.

Akil – Thank you all for picking this back up!

Advising

Akil – In the interests of the long-term health of our organizations, we're going to share some tip on **retention**, by which we mean, how we keep our members. Recruitment went well across the board this fall – congratulations to our students and to you all as advisors! But that isn't a great help in the long run if many of our new members leave, either formally by stopping the new-member process, or informally by fading away as the years go on. We should be cognizant about how we can help our undergraduates maintain their members not just for this year, but for the entire time as undergrads and beyond.

[Slides from this segment on Retention are posted on the AILG website at <https://ailg.mit.edu/sites/default/files/documents/2022%20AILG%20Retention.pdf>

Tips for helping your organization keep its members (elaborated from the slides):

- Please have an alum advisor to the chapter!
 - To communicate and talk with the undergraduates. Meet the new members, help new members see that their commitment isn't just for their undergrad years, but ongoing lifelong relationships
 - Have transition discussions with new officers (new ones were First-Years last time they were on campus!) Ask them what went well, what didn't, and what should change.
- Assist with expectations and roles
 - For all members, especially the newest
 - How do members find their place?
 - Recover lost organizational memory, for ex., timeline for processes with city
- Make your house appealing!
 - Realign traditions – keep good ones, maybe let some bad ones go - to put energy back in
 - Make an operational assessment, for example: How are meals? Facilities? (There are new dorms, students will be comparing.) Listen to the students about what they need, what would help them.
 - How can alums help bring value to membership? By being present, assisting, advising, showing why members join, why they stay involved after graduation.
- Remember: the FSILG Office meets regularly (at least every month, most house presidents meet w Liz every 2-4 weeks) with your undergrad leadership
 - How is this going?
 - Alums might benefit from similar tag-ups with the FSILG Office?
- Lessons from the Ops Team Sustainability Committee – that focused on finances, but without members, we won't have alums giving back later, after graduation. Retention ties into sustainability.
- PVP has a role here, as well, to help with retention efforts.

Other thoughts from those present:

- Meals are a big deal!
- COVID pushed more use of Zoom, and some houses have been able to engage more alums outside of the Boston area, since most of our alums are not here.
- Most organizations are in election season – touch base with your undergrads, help keep the energy going!

Upcoming

This is the last plenary of the calendar year, but some things are in the works for the time before the next one in February.

Upcoming AILG activities

- AILG holiday party? (Can't have non-student events on campus now, so not at Thirsty Ear, but maybe off-campus in-person social event sometime in Dec or Jan – Pam and Bob are looking into possibilities)
- Speaker at a future plenary, maybe from outside MIT, related maybe to campus life, Greek life... at a plenary or a special event
- IAP seminar series (each short, maybe 30 minutes total, can be 10 minutes of speaking, followed by Q&A)
 - IRDF / finance
 - Winter facility management and safety
 - House management 101, for alums and students
- IAP house walkthroughs, with BSF, committee members, with alums and student house managers, at your individual building, focused and customized for each organization
- Bob Ferrara Alum Leadership Retreat 2022 – “The Bob Retreat” – stay tuned!

Announcements/Other Business

Pam – The reconciliation/reimbursement process can be divided into three groups of organizations:

- Completed – these organizations will get a pre-filled worksheet to close-out
- In progress
- Houses who have not yet applied, who will definitely do a close-out option. We are aiming for a deadline of November 24th. Let Pam know if you need an extension.

Starting with the spring 2020 rebates of housebill reimbursements, when students were first sent home, the full tally of direct financial support from MIT to the FSILG organizations is about \$7 million. No other university offered this kind of support. We are lucky!

Dates:

- Next Board meeting is the first Thursday, December, 2 [this was later rescheduled to December 9]
- No board meeting in January (seminars instead)
- Next plenary Thursday, February 17, 2022

Adjournment – 6:56pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Tyler Kemp-Benedict, AILG Secretary

Abbreviations

AILG	Association of Independent Living Groups
BSF	Building Safety Facilitation
CPW	Campus Preview Weekend
DSL	Division of Student Life
EOG	Education Operating Grant
FCI	FSILG Cooperative, Inc.
FSILGs	Fraternities, Sororities and Independent Living Groups
GRA	Graduate Resident Advisor
IFC	Interfraternity Council
ILGs	Independent Living Groups
IRDF	Independent Residence Development Fund
LGC	Living Group Council
Panhel	Panhellenic Association
SLI	Safety, Licensing and Inspection Program