

AILG Board Meeting

Thursday, November 4, 2021 | Zoom | Meeting called to order at 6:06 pm by Akil Middleton

In Attendance

Board: Akil Middleton (ZP), Eric Cigan (LCA), Tyler Kemp-Benedict (pika), Mary Linton Peters (KAT)
Administration, Staff, Vendors: Brad Badgley (FSILG Office), Pam Gannon (AP/DSL), Scott Klemm (FCI),
Other Alumni/ae: Bob Ferrara (TC), Patrick McCabe (TT), Tom Stohlman (KS), Mark Thompson (ADP),
Stan Wulf (PDT, AILG Ombuds), Larry Stabile (TDC)

Review of Minutes

Minutes of the September and October board meetings were approved, pending minor corrections.

Treasurer's Update and Financial Report

Eric Cigan presented the Treasurer's report.

- [Balance sheet](#) - the balance sheet shows that we've received all the funding we had in the budget coming from IRDF, and that we've received the money collected by FCI for AILG member dues, SLI program support and BSF program support. The only new item is the \$7,988 in accounts receivable, in anticipation of AILG being reimbursed by IRDF for the cost of the new Facilities Renewal program *project management*.
- [Profit & loss, budget vs. actual](#) - the P&L statement is similarly normal, showing us spending monthly on the SLI and BSF work being done by FCI. The new item here is the \$7,988 for the new Facilities Renewal program (labeled **5305 - Facilities Renewal Expense**).

The Facilities Renewal program is now underway, starting with work on improving egress paths within FSILG buildings. IRDF is providing AILG with the funding for the project management aspects of Facilities Renewal, and AILG in turn pays the contractor that the Facilities Renewal Committee lined up to do the work. The contractor (Coast & Harbor Construction Management) invoices AILG, and AILG in turn invoices IRDF for the full amount.

Next month we can expect to see a new Income category on the P&L labeled **4304 - Fac. Renewal - IRDF Support**, which will reflect the amount AILG is reimbursed by IRDF. The new income and expense categories should track pretty closely, as AILG pays out to the contractor and is reimbursed by IRDF, and any difference between the two should appear as accounts receivable on the balance sheet.

Our taxes are due November 15. We're working with the same CPA as for the last several years, and those should be filed in the next week.

FSILG Office and Council Update

Brad: Big updates are related to student officer transitions. We're in election season – all the executive boards and chapters are going through their elections.

Midterm exams have ended, final exams are coming up, and students are wrapping things up for the semester. There will be a winter IAP expectations email (reminder about weather, etc.) We ask the GRAs to provide updates about who is expected to be in the house, which alums will be around, what the house plans to do. FSILG (Brad) and FCI (Scott) are jointly drafting this message, as usual.

With fairly large new member groups, new member orientation is under way. There are no indications of problems with retention at this point. FSILG office intends to elicit plans from students (and alums) for retention, especially around the housing lottery in the spring, for sororities especially, since IFC and ILG students mostly live in the houses by default.

FSILG Forward Efforts of Note

See <https://ailg.mit.edu/mission-goals> for the full list generated at the annual meeting. We'll focus on a few.

First, **retention**, which we just covered. Akil suggests including a slide for the November plenary about retention tips. Others are invited to work with Akil and Brad on this.

Second, **finance education**. Pam will work on planning a 30-minute seminar on the IRDF. January might be a good time for the seminar as December is a busy month for many. Pam announced that David Hutchings '10 has been appointed as a new member on the IRDF Board of Allocation (replacing David Latham '61, who served for 30+ years). IRDF Educational Operating Grant applications (EOGs) will be delayed this year, because we have to wait until all the MIT reimbursement and reconciliation is completed. It could even go into January.

There's also **house manager 101**, as we discussed before. Undergrad as well as house corporation treasurers might be interested in **best practices for house finances**, too, which would provide guidance to the students on what they need from alums (for IRDF applications, for example).

For January, if we aim for two community-focused 30-minute seminars per week, we could do up to eight.

Winter facilities management is the other FSILG Forward effort to focus on tonight, which the Facilities Committee is already working on.

Brad and Scott – In addition to the usual expectation-setting training that's already required for students, (that's a 1-hour fairly shallow overview), it would be helpful to have a hands-on supplemental functional tour, customized to each house. Attendees would be incoming and outgoing undergrad house managers, preferably an alum house manager, maybe FCI or BSF to facilitate, and if there have been security issues, the tour could include someone from MIT Campus Police. This would be in-person at each house.

AILG Facilities Committee would love to be involved in that. They are invited to help plan it.

This supplemental functional tour may be even better than a general facilities seminar. If it turns out to be redundant with a general seminar, then this could happen instead, rather than in addition. The students would get to know who to go to. Each house is unique, and this addresses that well.

Facilities Renewal Program

Pam - We've started walk-through surveys of doors and egress, in collaboration with Scott and Josh. Alums are invited but not required to attend. So far, it's going well. Patrick noted that he attended one and found it very educational to get an idea of what the assessors are looking for. You get more information out of it than you can get in written form. There may be a written FAQ to come, but it is more informative if you can be there.

Clarification of Roof Deck Process/Policy

There was an extended open discussion about the AILG policy on capacity and use of roof decks, with the goal of collecting recommendations and guidance for the Facilities Committee (FC) to make clarifying updates. The current AILG Roof Deck Occupancy Guidelines policy is at <http://web.mit.edu/ailg/archive/2016/11/AILGRoofdeck.pdf>. (The Roof Deck Capacity Chart linked from <https://ailg.mit.edu/facilities-committee-policies-guides-and-archive> is current.)

Decision: It would be helpful to have the steps of event approval processes and the relevant context available in writing, to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts. The beneficial partnership between MIT and AILG member organizations should be clarified in this documentation, as well. The FC – or a smaller subcommittee – is asked to develop a more-complete codified version of the *current policy* to bring back to the board, for review and approval as a revision of the roof deck process. There was a suggestion to present the policy in the form of a checklist to guide the process for getting approval and setting capacity limits.

In the meantime, the Board is invited to clarify the scope for all the AILG committees, for example, where on the scale – between content provision (acting as experts) and process enforcement (making sure there is expert input) – they are expected to act.

[The following is a detailed summary of the discussion. The AILG Board makes no claims about the factual correctness of anything that was said.]

After an incident a few years ago brought some attention from the City of Boston to expired permits, AILG started requiring architectural review of roof decks, and we've limited roof decks to casual use by residents (not for social gatherings of students). We have strictly limited their use for social events. Alums may use them occasionally, but the policy since 2015 requires multiple levels of approval (city, architects, AILG Facilities Committee, and MIT) to decide what they can be used for and by how many people, on a case-by-case basis. Few roof decks are approved by the municipalities, and those certifications must be renewed every five years (similar to fire escapes). For a city-certified and AILG-approved roof deck, the AILG FC recommends a capacity limit for casual use, and a maximum capacity for special events. (The committee doesn't usually just say No if a chapter is requesting approval. There is a conversation, so the chapter understands the FC's concerns, and both come to an agreement.)

The FSILG Office has final say on whether a proposed rooftop deck *event* can occur (special event registration policy is at [https://studentlife.mit.edu/sites/default/files/FSILG Social Events Policy_4.pdf](https://studentlife.mit.edu/sites/default/files/FSILG%20Social%20Events%20Policy_4.pdf)), and on the capacity limit for that event, which generally would not exceed the maximum agreed with the AILG FC for that roof deck). The event limit can depend on the conditions, for example wet or dry, and the type of planned activities. Alumni events are special events, but not all special events are alumni events. On the student side of special events, one requirement is having enough people in the chapter who have attended Social Host Training (formally known as Party Safe Plus Training).

There is currently only one approved roof deck that can make use of this special rooftop deck event policy (PBE). Even for an alum dinner, they can't grill on the roof deck, but they can cater and bring food up. The FSILG office asks for advance notice.

Now, a pending request from a house to increase its roof deck capacity limits has exposed ambiguity in the current policy. (This case has not yet been decided by the Facilities Committee.) There are questions about

the required process for the capacity decision, whose interpretation of code applies, and whether having an architect attest that the roof deck meets state code and following municipal rules are considered sufficient. AILG intentionally aims for a stricter standard on safety than just meeting code, in part so that all member organizations are following the same AILG guidance, no matter which city they are in, and in part because we consider the most generous interpretations of some state codes not to be conservative enough. (They may allow too many people for us to feel confident it's safe.)

So far, PBE has the only special event approved roof deck, after doing significant work on it, with an architect. Every other house with a roof deck has a capacity (recorded on a list maintained by Peter Cooper). A special use number would be the absolute max they would ever request. In that case, all furniture would be removed. (PBE's architect interpreted the code to set that number in the 200+ range, but the Facilities Committee was not comfortable with that. So by AILG/FC policy, their max was set at 65, voluntarily. That large number is beyond their occupancy, but it's only for special events, because that's the only time they could use that number. A chapter might be able to go to the city – a "higher authority" – to request a higher number, and the AILG Facilities Committee would be OK with that, but that would not constitute an ongoing change to capacity.

Ongoing assembly permits are no longer issued by the city. If you want to have a gathering, an assembly beyond the occupancy of the house, you need to get a one-day assembly permit from the city. Boston and Cambridge are very different, but MIT doesn't want different rules for its different licensed facilities.

The purpose of the AILG policy is to facilitate successful events. Ultimately the purpose of the properties is to house students. MIT has a stake in that and wants to know what events are going on in the houses (including MIT Police).

Brad's office acts as a mediator here, to help things go more smoothly. Based on current social events policy, one-time events have to be approved (by the FSILG Office) case-by-case, well in advance. They have never had to say no to something unless someone was not transparent about what they were trying to do. "We're trying to set everyone up for success."

On the other end of these situations, MIT can be very helpful if a house gets cited by the City of Boston for something. It's helpful if MIT can go to the municipal board and say, yes, they have followed our policy.

It would be helpful to have the steps of these approval processes and the relevant context available in writing, to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts in the future. The beneficial partnership between MIT and AILG member organizations should be clarified in this documentation, as well.

This is a challenging kind of policy to codify. It can't be predetermined, since every architect can interpret the code differently. We would like to avoid a situation where a house invests a lot of money in renovations on the expectation that their new/upgraded roof deck will be approved for special events at a certain capacity, but it is not. We want to make the expectations clearer.

Question from a Board member: Any of our committees has two roles – to be experts in a subject, or to make sure there is expert input. For this process, are we expecting the FC to say, you've gone through a process (step-by-step), or is the FC providing a content decision? Answer from a member of the Facilities Committee: We got to where we are because everything was stopped [all roof deck events], and we're trying to provide a path forward from when nothing was allowed. At this time, it's both. Maybe we can

get to a point that the approvals can come from an external source, and the FC doesn't have to be involved any more.

Maybe the Board needs to help define the charges for the committees. The Board is not trying to push the FC out of this process.

November Plenary Planning

Ideas for the agenda of the November 18th plenary:

- Peer Visit Program launch
- some best practices
- Bob could give a tour of the AILG website, and encourage it to be used more
- Pam is posting IRDF announcements on the AILG website
- Amy Davis about MITAA support of FSILGs – mailing lists, event support, etc.
- update on FLIP program (FSILG Life-Safety Improvement Program, Facilities Renewal)
 - Yes, by then, half of the houses will have had their doors and egress pathways assessed, and the resulting reports may generate some questions. We'll be able to communicate the base assumptions for the houses to help them interpret the reports. Pam can give a general overview. (We could have a dedicated meeting if there's a need to go deeper.)

December Board Meeting

Tentatively, the board meeting will remain on the first Thursday as usual (Dec 2). Pam and Bob will research options for an off-campus AILG holiday party, possibly on a separate date. We would request that all attendees be vaccinated.

Other Business and Announcements

- Speakers - please email ideas for speakers for a possible January IAP event.
- We will consider inviting the new Chancellor, maybe for the February plenary.
- Is it time to revive the FSILG Alumni Retreat in honor of Bob Ferrara (informally known as the Bob Retreat) this Spring?
- We could have a Board meeting during IAP to focus on goals, maybe half a day.
- Scott – FCI had its annual meeting and renewed all the same officers. FCI had a year so successful, it's now paying a fair amount in taxes. Undergrads are back, and purchasing is back to normal levels, which is all welcome. So far, there has been less of a jump in maintenance and construction work than was feared. There may be more as the heating season begins. To avoid unnecessary calls to FCI, please make sure house managers understand how to turn the heat on. (Make sure it's not set to "cool".)
- There will be no rebates from FCI this year, because MIT supported fixed costs. Any extra will be used for expanded programs.
- Pam will be coordinating with the few houses that have not yet completed their reimbursement reconciliation/consolidation from MIT's support to FSILG organizations during the pandemic closures, and communicating about the conclusion of that process.

Adjournment – 7:24pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Tyler Kemp-Benedict, AILG Secretary

Abbreviations

AILG	Association of Independent Living Groups
BSF	Building Safety Facilitator
CPW	Campus Preview Weekend
DSL	Division of Student Life
EOGs	Educational Operating Grants (IRDF)
FCI	FSILG Cooperative, Inc.
FSILGs	Fraternalities, Sororities and Independent Living Groups
IFC	Interfraternity Council
ILGs	Independent Living Groups
IRDF	Independent Residence Development Fund
IS&T	Information Systems & Technology
LGC	Living Group Council
MITAA	MIT Alumni Association
NIC	North American Interfraternity Conference
NPC	National Panhellenic Conference
Panhel	Panhellenic Association
SLI	Safety, Licensing, and Inspections