

# CE&CF BOARD MEETING

February 16, 2024

Present: Kent Allen, Dick Fenstermacher, Bill Giesler, Wayne Gilsdorf, Steve Simendinger, Barry Wanninger. Excused: Mike Dever, Bill Hoeb, Jay Radley, Pete Smith, Jim Sparrow. Quorum. Guest: Wiley Lyons, Active Chapter President.

1. Approval of November 17, 2023 Board Minutes – Dick Fenstermacher moved to approve, Bill Giesler seconded, unanimous approval.

**President's Report** – Bill Giesler

## Active Chapter

By: Wiley Lyons, Active Chapter President

Fall Chapter GPA: 3.49, highest GPA of any fraternity! 20 brothers with a 4.0; 91 brothers on the Dean's List.

Alpha Xi kicked off the spring semester strong with our formal trip to Nashville over MLK weekend. 151 members in attendance (~300 total people), 94% of chapter. Recruitment week is in full swing now, but attendance has been incredible from the Potential New Members. Greek Life interest is climbing here on campus.

Upcoming FSL Award Finalists (February 22<sup>nd</sup>): Chapter Leadership Award; Chapter of the Year Award; Career and Leadership Award; Community Engagement Award; Scholarly Initiative Award; IFC for Health and Safety Award; Co-op Leader Award – Jacob Stiens; Outstanding Citizen Award - Chuck Hamilton; New Member of the Year Award – Michael Roncallo.

PIKE University hosted by Nationals: Thank you to the alumni that donated through the Nationals portal, it allowed us to send 54 Brothers to Chicago for this conference.

Finally, members are excited for the annual Founder's Day celebration. Sign-ups are still live as I type this, but we anticipate another great turnout from active chapter. Thank you all so much for creating such an impactful event for all in attendance. This is not only a great night, but it significantly influences how many brothers fund their education.

This will be my final CE&CF board meeting as we enter our exec board elections in March. The experience of sitting in this room with you all as an undergraduate is unbelievable. It's remarkable that what connects us all is our commitment and love for Alpha Xi. Thank you all for making this fraternity so special to thousands of brothers and adding such a valuable chapter to all our stories.

## SHA

By: Mark Wood, SHA President

SHA is currently exploring course options for a spring outing. Options are very limited to remain within I-275 and at a price that is reasonable. Separately, SHA and CE&CF Board Member Jay Radley

are rallying for Founders' Day registrations from the 2000's graduates and younger. An effort is underway to facilitate a post FD gathering as well. SHA Activity Calendar & Engagement Strategy – Jay Radley is working to develop a more forward planned event/activity schedule to enroll alums across generations.

#### UCPHC

By: Alex Glutz

- 2024 Resident Leases have been completed; the house will continue to be at maximum capacity.
- We anticipate signing the Chapter Lease in the next few weeks.

#### **Treasurer's Report – Jim Sparrow**

No Report

#### **Fundraising Report – Bill Hoeb**

##### Annual Fundraising Program (AFRP)

Contributions for the 2023-2024 fiscal year total \$137,922 as of February 7, 2024.

SHA is using [ucpikes.org](http://ucpikes.org) to send their SHA newsletters. Jay Radley is working to establish regular SHA updates including promotions and registration for our 2024 Founders' Day banquet as well as other social events.

A group of young alums have created mild interest in support of the **1910 Society** and recently promoted their efforts with a detailed email blast on [ucpikes.org](http://ucpikes.org). In early December the same nucleus of six young alums committed to creating the Mick & Mack Scholarship Fund. The new fund's value is currently \$4,200.

##### Association Connection (A/C)

Recently we posted the annual update to the CE&CF Board Manual on [ucpikes.org](http://ucpikes.org). A/C is assisting Jay Radley with SHA news and information and coordinating their emails with those of CE&CF.

We are using primarily online registrations as they are an effective and easy way to announce and make reservations for our social events.

#### **Investment Committee Report – Steve Simendinger**

The CE and CF investment account had a total value of \$1,859,714 as of December 31, 2023. For the first half of the fiscal year (July 1-December 31, 2023), the portfolio gained 4.2%. For the calendar year ending December 31, 2023, the CE and CF portfolio returned a positive 10.5%. Contributions for the first half of the fiscal year totaled a robust \$133,256. For the immediate future, the portfolio target asset allocation continues at 60% equities and 40% fixed income. Common equity and real assets represent 57.8% of the portfolio, with fixed income at 39.6% and cash at 2.6%. The CE and CF portfolio remains a high quality, value-oriented portfolio. After nicely outperforming the equity benchmark in the 2022 down market, the stock portion of the portfolio trailed the equity benchmark in 2023 for both the fiscal (last 6 months) and calendar year. The portfolio has outperformed the equity benchmark 3 of the past five years, in spite of the quality overlay. Technology stocks, especially the Magnificent Seven large cap growth names, led the market in 2023. The CE and CF

portfolio was underweight technology (-8.7%) and consumer discretionary (-4.1%), and overweight in non-bank financial stocks (+5.8%), consumer staples, health care, energy and utilities versus the Standard and Poor's 500 stock index. This sector orientation led to the underperformance in 2023. International stocks represent 16.1% of the stock portion. Mid and small cap exposure presently totals 14.6% of the equities. The recent plateau in interest rates may be a positive for stocks and bonds in 2024, especially if Fed rate cuts unfold as the year progresses. However, persistent inflation, a Presidential election year, and ballooning Federal deficits muddy the outlook for U.S equity returns in 2024. .

### **Scholarship Committee Report – Barry Wanninger**

The scholarship committee met with Brother Giesler in attendance on Thursday, January 18th to approve the active chapter award recommendations and select other award recipients. Including the final selections for the Quinn Family and Brookline scholarships received after the selection meeting there will be a total of thirty-five awards for a total of \$64,000 presented. Another great year!

### **Nominating Committee Report – Bill Giesler**

Given the consideration of long-range succession planning at the Officer and Committee Chair level, the Nominations Committee is recommending that the Board expand to twelve Trustees. Interviews of candidates have been conducted and the Committee is recommending that Bud Banks be elected as Trustee. Bill Giesler presented Bud's qualifications and interest. After discussion, Dick Fenstermacher moved "that the Board approve Bud Banks as a Trustee of the Board of CE&CF effective with the May 2024 Board meeting with a 4-year term to run June 2024 – June 2028". Kent Allen seconded. Unanimous approval.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Digby Lot Development Project Update – Kent Allen**

An Exploratory Committee has been formed to lead this project. Members from Active Chapter are Wiley Lyons, Rishi Gabbita and Christian Wall. Alumni members are John Mang, Jay Radley and Kent Allen. Kent will chair the Project.

The Committee began with the fundamental question "Why should we do this project"? Active Chapter presented a "Case for Alpha Xi Housing Expansion" including: the current state of the Nester House (the current chapter is now 3 times the size when the doors were opened in 2007, is the largest fraternity on campus with the smallest house at 28 beds, and is the oldest house given recent major high dollar renovations at competing fraternities); House Demand (demand exceeds availability with 48+ applications for 28 beds; and, IFC Overview (both University enrollment and participation in the Greek system are growing). (See Attachment A for more detail).

Both the generous CE&CF endowed scholarship awards and the Nester House are viewed as competitive differentiators for Active Chapter in attracting quality college men to Alpha Xi. Expansion of the Nester House (additional beds, large community room, added common outdoor area, etc.) will expand and enhance the culture of fraternal community and personal growth needed and sought by college men today. Expansion will foster a continuance of excellence (21 Smythe Awards) and continue to set the standard for UC fraternities (highest campus fraternity GPA, campus leadership, etc).

Next Steps:

1. Organize Leadership teams – Kent will have oversight of this endeavor.

The Committee will be organized into 3 teams; 1. Fundraising; 2. Business/Finance; 3. Design/Build Management.

Bill Giesler will lead the Design/Build team. The Committee is in the process of identifying leads for the other teams. Members of Active Chapter will be engaged with the teams.

2. Two build estimates for the project have been received that differ by \$1.5 million (related to assessment of soil conditions, drainage, retention of borders, etc.). Given that wide variance in cost, a geotechnical study / engineering assessment of soil conditions is recommended in order to assess total costs for the project with confidence. Dick Fenstermacher motioned that “CE&CF allocate up to \$100,000 to UCPHC as a loan at the prevailing interest rate in order to hire an engineering firm to complete a geotechnical and engineering assessment for the Digby Lot project”. Bill Giesler seconded. Unanimous approval.

### **New Business**

None.

**Adjourn: 12:50PM**

**Next Meeting:** May 10 - KCC - 11:30 AM

Attachment: “Case for Alpha Xi Housing Expansion”



## Case for Alpha Xi Housing Expansion

### Current state of Nester House

- Opened in 2007, the William R. Nester House has served as a centerpiece of Alpha Xi since. It quickly became the hub of all chapter operations after almost 60 years at Alpha Xi's previous residence at 3400 Brookline Avenue. Smaller-scale renovations have enabled the house to better service a chapter now 3 times the size of what it was when it first opened its doors.

### House Demand

- Over the past decade, Alpha Xi's membership has ranged from 150 to 180 brothers. In recent years, there has been a consistent influx of applications from 48+ brothers seeking to live at the Nester Home. With current capacity limited to 28 beds, many brothers have been turned away each year. Recognizing this demand, we propose the addition of 10+ beds to significantly increase the brothers living on site while also remaining committed to having a full house every year.

### IFC Overview

- As the university expands, so does the number of men seeking a sense of belonging through campus organizations. The IFC and the broader Greek Community, buoyed by alumni engagement and investment, have experienced steady growth. This is showcased through housing projects below.

Chapter	Current Membership	Beds	Expansion / Renovation Cost	Year Completed
Beta Theta Pi*	141	65	\$5.5 Million	2024 - <i>Currently Under Construction</i>
Sigma Chi	141	40	\$5 Million	2023
Sigma Phi Epsilon	102	49	\$2.5 Million	2014
Delta Tau Delta	131	30	\$2.5 Million	2011
Sigma Alpha Epsilon	132	50	\$4.5 Million	2010
<b>Pi Kappa Alpha</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>28</b>		<b>2007</b>

### Alpha Xi Achievements

- Alpha Xi has continually represented the pinnacle of what a fraternity can be. This is abundantly clear through the membership, co-op success, academic excellence, intramural dominance, sorority relations, membership development, and extensive campus involvement. Headlining these achievements are 21 Robert Adger Smythe awards, including 16 in the last 17 years.

### Call to action



# ΠΚΑ

- The future of Alpha Xi is destined to shine even brighter than its past. The University of Cincinnati, witnessing consistent record enrollments and the Bearcats making a leap into the Big 12, reflects a landscape of continual growth. In Clifton, where new buildings pop up at an astounding rate, the momentum shows no signs of slowing down.
- Alpha Xi, time and again, has represented the highest of fraternity ideals. This expansion project promises to not only elevate the fraternity experience for those already initiated, but also positions Alpha Xi to perpetuate its legacy as a dominant fraternity for generations to come.