

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DROSTDY HALL COMMITTEE HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 18 AUGUST 2021 AT 18:00 VIA GOOGLE MEET**

2021.03.01 ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES**HALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Present: Tlamelo Mothudi (*Chair, Acting Hall Warden & AG Warden*), Ridge Chavalala (*Co-Chair & Celeste Head Student*), Adv. Shuaib Rahim (*Hall Fellow*), Natalie Paterson (*Hall Fellow*), Sean Nkosi (*Graham Warden*), Francis Chindeka (*Celeste Warden*), Andiswa Cibi (*AG Sub-Warden*), Kwami Mkize (*AG Sub-Warden*), Kgotso Ndlovu (*Celeste Sub-Warden*), Rutendo Gandidze (*Celeste Sub-Warden*), Mohammed Bera (*Graham Sub-Warden*), Furman Nzama (*Graham Sub-Warden*), Antonique Dick (*PA Sub-Warden*), Nkosinomsa Ngwenya (*PA Sub-Warden*), Lavisa Sibiya (*AG Head Student*).

Apologies: Mr Evert Knoesen (*Hall Fellow*), Ayakha Saba (*AG Sub-Warden*), Cara Dube (*PA Head Student*).

By Invite: House Committee Members

Apologies: Charmaine Thulo (*Celeste Environmental Rep*), Ndinalo Ngxangane (*Graham Sports Rep*).

Tlamelo welcomed everyone to the Meeting, including the Hall Fellows in attendance, Adv. Rahim & Natalie Paterson.

It was noted that the meeting is recorded for minuting purposes.

2021.03.02 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Hall Committee Meeting held on 25 May 2021 were confirmed by Antonique and Lavisa.

2021.03.03 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda.

2021.03.04 OTHER MATTERS FOR THE AGENDA

1. Vaccines (2021.03.08) This will become item 8 and mid-year leadership refresher training will move to item 9.

2021.03.05 REPORTS BY HEAD STUDENTS**Prince Alfred House**

As Cara could not attend the meeting due to a test, she submitted her report in advance via a recording and the link was shared on the Agenda as follows, and it was assumed that everyone listened to it.:

- First one (to be played first):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ykT7vY7kapBZmZbsjNkWjvQJiNnzurpm>

- To be played second:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cwcOPLNIRMs6WCpvYwlDIdE2Sr9ypjxt/view?usp=drive_sdk

Graham

Sean reported that they had recently received a resignation from the Graham Head Student, and they had not had a chance to compile a report before the meeting. Sean will compile a report with the Sub-Wardens and will e-mail it to everyone, and will start the process to find a replacement Head Student.

Allan Gray

Lavisa reported the following:

- The AG students would like the sign-out book brought back instead of having to fill in a form that requires permission from the Warden.
- Activities: plan to have a games night and a pyjama party.
- Academics: Academic Rep was in charge for the academic talk for the first years and the academic talk for the hall. This semester she wants to do academic certificates of acknowledgement for the students in Res who achieved well.

- Transformation: Transformation Rep planned the consent talk and decorating in the Dining Hall for Pride Month. This term she wants to celebrate Women's Month by handing out chocolates and cards to those who identify as females.
- Stu Networking: Encouraged sustainable printing and the shift to digital copies and reiterating the issue of following the printing limit within Res. This semester she wants to reiterate the first semester plans and to also implement recycling of wastage printing paper and excess sheets of paper any student may have, instead of throwing paper away.
- Secretary: She had to stop with birthday wishes because some of the students were very uncomfortable with that. She linked the AG Instagram and Facebook pages. This semester she would like to be more active on both those pages.
- Environmental: Students were educated on water saving methods. On Earth Day they had an artistic afternoon in which students gathered in the courtyard and helped to make Environmental posters. For this semester 5L bottles to use for more Eco bricks.
- Entertainment: The Entertainment Rep only arrived in term 2 so she did not have a lot of time to plan any events but she did have a braai. This semester she is planning to have more internal events like game nights and pyjama parties.
- Community Engagement: They did online training and came up with a plan to tackle the problem that they have with Noncedo Preschool. For this semester they were able to submit a proposal in which they were able to volunteer to go pick up trash and make educational posters for decorating the walls.
- Treasurer: Res and tuckshop money was used for a movie night, the braai and for food when there was a strike.

Celeste

Ridge reported the following:

- Before start of term had a welcoming and words of motivation from their Warden where each student was given a little word of motivation using their sub group and everyone appreciated that to start the term more effectively.
- Had their first house and house comm meeting last week where they came together as a house to plan their term activities.
- Academics: Plan to start their small study groups using their common rooms. If someone is feeling demotivated to continue with their studies they can WhatsApp one of the house comm members if they need help with something or words of motivation. They will be opening their study groups for 24 hours and bookings to be made via the Academic Rep.
- Community Engagement: Plan to do a pad drive and identify one school within town within their reach whereby they will be able to donate all items.
- Entertainment: Planning to have a Heritage Day celebration whereby they learn each other's languages. House photo is also planned for this semester.
- Environmental: Planning to promote health awareness within our own residence. Have a specific date whereby they clean and garden in the surrounds of their own residence to keep it clean.
- Stu Networking: Last semester the printing paper was going missing. This semester the printing paper will be monitored and strictly provided and if you need paper you need to liaise with the Networking Rep.
- Sports: Stared group sessions in the morning to run/jog. Planning to have a 10 day challenge whereby all of them have to get up early to run/jog for 10 days and at the end of the day they will have a little celebration for achieving their goal to promote their health awareness.
- Treasury: Waiting to find out their available budget for the semester.
- Health Awareness: Have started Monday motivations. Spreading positive messages to everyone in the house.

2021.03.06

REPORTS BY SUB-WARDENS

Prince Alfred

Antonique reported the following;

- So far 41 students back in res out of 52.

- During term one they had a few students who broke the rules that consisted mostly of first years and new students. Most of them broke the rule of being in each other's rooms, and a few got hours for missing house meetings.
- A lot of students have not been following the protocol of notifying the Sub-Wardens the day before they arrive and this leads to the issue of the Sub-Wardens having to keep on rushing back to Res to give them keys. Some students just arrive and go straight into their room as rooms were left open after housekeeping cleaned them, and then they don't send the Sub-Wardens their health check forms from CPU. For now the Sub-Wardens have locked all the rooms of those students still to arrive so that they only get their room key and forms on arrival once they have got their form from CPU.
- Students are not impressed with the 10 day limited movement period as they feel that if they isolated/quarantined at home is it really necessary to follow the 10 day limited movement period. Adv. Rahim explained that it is necessary as in transition to campus students may have inadvertently been exposed to Covid. This type of procedure is not necessarily specific to RU, this is the same principal that is also applied even in international travel for most countries where you have to subject yourself to a Covid test prior and after travel, and in some cases quarantine at your own expense. The 10 day limited movement period is an added precaution because the delta variant is exceptionally transmissible and is particular devastating to the youth. It was asked if students needing to go to town does not defeat the purpose of this rule. Adv. Rahim stated that we can only manage what happens on campus and that we can't limited people from going to buy water and other necessities but we need to ask students to observe strict protocols around social distancing when going to town.

Allan Gray

Kwami reported the following:

- The spreadsheet strategy has been working very well for them so they are able to note when students are arriving, note students who have or have not signed certain forms, assisting with students getting their key and necessary forms, and the return of those forms have been fairly efficient compared to last semester's delays.
- Students are complying very well to social distancing and mask wearing protocols within Res. So far this semester no students have broken any Covid protocols and students are now accustomed to wearing a mask when they leave their room. So far no room visiting breaches.

Graham

Furman reported the following:

- One of the biggest challenges they have had are with students smoking in Res, especially during curfew. What should smokers do during curfew? Tlamelo suggested that students should communicate with the Warden to give the Warden a heads-up that they will go outside to smoke and therefore will breach curfew, but obviously this would be discontinued if trust was broken in any way. Graham could possibly use their drying yard area, as for example Allan Gray uses their drying yard area and outside quad area so that students do not breach curfew.
- Another challenge they have experienced is with individuals sending unnecessary messages/content on their res group chat and then students miss the important messages in between all the other unnecessary messages.
- There is concern of a clash of Graham House culture. First years, while no senior students were around at the beginning of the year, developed their own culture. Now they have senior students returning whose culture in Res was very different to that of the first years and this might affect discipline in the house. This will be closely monitored.
- The wearing of masks has improved in their Res since from last semester.
- They have been having problems with students arriving at odd hours and not informing the Sub-Wardens of their arrival in advance.

Celeste

Kgotso reported the following:

- Most students are back in Res.

- A major complaint from the students is with maintenance. The students have been putting their requests on the requisition sheet but things take a very long time to be fixed.
- They also have a problem with their front gates and curfew. If you exit the front inner gate to collect water from the water tanks then you show up on the curfew report as breaking curfew even though you have not left Celeste, as you only leave Celeste when you exit the front outer gate, and not the inner gate. Obviously with the water outages in Makhanda students need to collect water from the tanks often. Tlamelo suggested that they ask Residential Operations for more black wheelie bins to store water in, one for each floor, as currently the ground floor does not have, and the middle and top floor need one more each as the water gets used up very quickly as many students self-cater in Celeste and use the water for cleaning dishes and the kitchen.
- The smokers in Celeste have a problem as the Celeste House yard does not allow 10 meters away from the Res building, unless you go outside of Celeste but then there is the curfew issue. Tlamelo suggested that in the context of Covid and the curfew for Celeste to have this conversation with the DSA, and Tlamelo will ask Adv. Rahim to what extent this is possible, to find out if students can smoke in the Celeste yard even though it is not 10 meters away, but that we are still within the bounds of the Disaster Management Act regulations. Tlamelo also suggested that the smokers communicate with their Warden about possibly smoking outside of Celeste during curfew. It's about communication and trust.

2021.03.07 BOARD OF RESIDENCES MEETING (24 AUGUST): REPRESENTATION & HALL AGENDA ITEM

Mohammed Bera volunteered to attend as the Drostdy Student Representative, seeing that Graham House have their water tank proposal.

2021.03.08 VACCINES

Adv. Rahim reported that he is also a member of the University Disciplinary Board, particularly dealing with higher discipline and sexual offences in matters of appeal. He is therefore happy to assist with any matters or guidance around disciplinary issues or questions that anyone may have.

In relation to this discussion, Adv. Rahim is also a member of the CVRTT, Coronavirus Response Task Team, and reported the following:

Vaccinations will be opening for the youth, and most importantly our student body, by the 01 September 2021 the latest. We are very fortunate to have a fully functional, well equipped, well trained & well-staffed satellite site for vaccinations. One of the CVRTT's functions is to formulate all the protocols the University has had to navigate through.

They want to extend an invitation, especially to the student leadership, in terms of leadership training that will be specific towards Covid 19, the Covid 19 protocols, navigating the disciplinary code with all its additional ramifications relating to this, and subtleties around any particular questions students may have as to whether or not they may or may not fall foul of the rules. It is Adv. Rahim's personal view that he would rather move towards a position where we are educating and empowering students as opposed to punishing and penalising them for infractions which simply could have been avoided. The important conversation around the 10m smoking situation at Celeste is a prime example.

There has been a noted decline in fractions related to Covid 19 protocols which is positive, however, unfortunately we have seen in just 3 days a 20% increase in Covid cases in Makhanda. This is the worst it has been in the City since the start of the pandemic. We currently have at least 120 active cases in our City. The delta variant particularly targets the youth.

Adv. Rahim had a very positive meeting with Veronica Israel today and have come up with a proposal around a training programme for all the Halls on Covid 19, vaccinations, pros and cons, myths, misconceptions, fears, any concerns, and also creating a space of support. The

training for upper campus will be held on Monday 30 August and on Tuesday 31 August for lower campus. The impact on mental health will also be detrimental towards students' ability to be successful in their teaching and learning, and we would like to mitigate against that.

After the vac in September they will be ready to launch a credited certified training for the leadership. The idea is to create our own vaccination champions who could then go out with confidence and speak to the complexities regarding vaccinations and create a seamless communication channel between all strata of the University. They would then like to create an established project that will be sustainable going into 2022 so that we can train the incoming leadership so that we don't have to start from scratch each and every year.

2021.03.09

MID-YEAR LEADERSHIP REFRESHER TRAINING

After a vote it was decided to have the training fully online with no face-to face, and to have the training full day on Saturday instead of a half day on Saturday and Sunday. No comments were received regarding adding or removing items from the proposed programme, and no objections were received with going ahead with the proposed programme.

We are lucky to have Adv. Rahim doing the leadership session for the training. For the planning session, the leadership students were asked to start thinking of what plans they want for their specific portfolios and to bring recommendations for other portfolios, and constructive criticism is always necessary.

It was decided to include a mock hearing in the training as we require the assistance of some of the leadership students with hearings. Sometimes there is confusion with regards to how a hearing takes place, what it looks like, the expectations of the parties in the room. Therefore an online mock hearing will be held to get a better idea of the flow of disciplinary hearings, and it is important for students to know their rights. The following volunteers are needed from the student leadership:

- 1 x presenter
- 1 x witness
- 1 x chair
- 1 x accused
- 4 x observers, who will watch and give feedback and raise concerns.

Lavisa volunteered to be an observer and Aiden volunteered to be the accused. As there were no other volunteers, leadership students will be allocated to the remaining roles.

The meeting ended at 19h20.