

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DROSTDY HALL COMMITTEE HELD ON
TUESDAY 25 MAY 2021 AT 19:00 VIA ZOOM MEETING**

2021.02.01 ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES

Present: Catherine Parkinson (*Chair, Hall Warden & PA Warden*), Sean Nkosi (*Celeste Warden*), Tlamelo Mothudi (*AG Warden*), Andiswa Cibi (*AG Sub-Warden*), Kwami Mkize (*AG Sub-Warden*), Ayakha Saba (*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*), Lavisia Sibiyi (*AG Head Student*), Ridge Chavalala (*Celeste Head Student*), Ricky Mutasa (*Graham Head Student*), Cara Dube (*PA Head Student*).

In attendance: Candice Webber (*Drostdy Hall Administrator*).

Apologies: Adv. Shuaib Rahim (*Hall Fellow*), Mr Evert Knoesen (*Hall Fellow*), Natalie Paterson (*Hall Fellow*).

Catherine welcomed Ridge, the newly elected Celeste House Head Student, to his first Hall Committee Meeting.

There were no objections to the meeting being recorded for minuting purposes.

2021.02.02 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Hall Committee Meeting held on 19 April 2021 were confirmed by Antonique and Cara.

2021.02.03 MATTERS ARISING

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

2021.02.04 OTHER MATTERS FOR THE AGENDA

1. **Taxi Strike:** The last two days have been chaotic in terms of food and meal vouchers. Thank you to everyone for their support, dashing around, collecting food, and thank you for pulling together. We do not know yet what is happening tomorrow with the strike.
2. **Wardens:** Sean has moved over to Graham as the Graham House Warden. A candidate has been interviewed for the Celeste Warden post and HR have sent out the offer letter to this candidate and we are now waiting to hear whether or not they accept the position.
3. **Common Rooms (2021.02.10)** This will become item 10 and Hall Grant will move to item 11.

2021.02.05 REPORTS ON RESIDENCES BY HEAD STUDENTS**Allan Gray**

Lavisia submitted her report today via the Hall Comm WhatsApp Group.

See Appendix 1.

Celeste

Ridge submitted his report in advance, which was circulated with the Agenda.

See Appendix 2.

Graham

Ricky submitted his report in advance, which was circulated with the Agenda.

See Appendix 3.

Prince Alfred

Cara submitted her report in advance, which was circulated with the Agenda.

See Appendix 4.

There were no questions regarding the reports and they were taken as read.

The Head Students were thanked for their reports, mostly short and sweet, and they were informed that in future they can add more detail and content.

2021.02.06 **WATER OUTAGES**

The Committee noted the proposal submitted by Graham House, which was circulated with the Agenda. *See Appendix 5.*

The proposal is in order to try and eradicate water problems in the Graham bathrooms. Others have it worse but right now they want to focus just on Graham as it is hard when there is no water. They feel that Housekeeping Staff carrying water from the outside jojo tanks and up to the first and second floors should not be the responsibility of Housekeeping staff. They would like to humbly request one or two jojo tanks be installed at Graham and connected to the plumbing, so that they can at the very least get enough water to the toilets for flushing, as it does get unpleasant.

It was reported that essentially this has been on the University's map for a couple of years now to go onto some form of grey water system for toilet flushing, and trial testing was done etc., however RU has no set plan. It was explained that Botha House have jojo tanks that are connected to plumbing and are the first to get this as they have recently been renovated and are on a trial basis with this.

This is not an issue that Drostdy can solve but it can be raised higher. The possible option is to take it as a Graham proposal to Board of Residences; or as a Drostdy Hall proposal to Board of Residences; or even expanding it to a SRC Environmental Officer as a RU proposal to Board of Residences, but it is entirely up to Graham to decide. RU has no set plan but maybe we can request at Board of Residences for a timeline.

Cath asked, and has been asking, for the two big tanks outside the dining hall to be connected to the rain water pipes. Cath's latest request, that is to go through the Water Task Team when they have their first meeting this year, is to ask for one of the tanks to be plumbed into the Drostdy Kitchen with a pump so that during water outages we do not have to use polystyrene and can use normal cutlery and crockery as they can still be washed. It is a simple solution but once again no clear timeline. Cath will share her Drostdy Kitchen water proposal with Mohammed to include in the Graham House proposal to go to Board of Residences. The proposal was an e-mail sent to Dawie and Jay and Cath will happily share this with the rest of the Hall Committee.

Therefore this proposal will change from a Graham to a Drostdy Hall proposal. Whichever Hall Committee student member is going to the next Board of Residences meeting will need to take this forward, submit this as an agenda item and will need to speak to that agenda item at the actual Board of Residences meeting.

It might also be interesting to find out how much all this would cost so that each individual residence can possibly fundraise, as this as a RU matter might take a while. Possibly a simple tank and pump, as for a grey water system chemicals would be needed, however, the higher the building the harder the plumbing becomes, but this could possibly be an option.

2021.02.07 **LEADERSHIP**

Hall Senior Student: We opened up nominations for Hall Senior Student and nobody came forward at the time. It has been indicated that there is now someone interested in running. Having a Hall Senior Student will make it easier when it comes to Hall events, and the Committee agreed to reopen nominations for a 24 hour period. Committee Members are to please encourage students to nominate themselves and follow the correct procedures. Even

if we have a Hall Senior Student this does not mean that the Hall Senior Student will do everything, they will still need support and help from the rest of the Hall Committee.

Consent Talk: Cath reported that it went much better than she thought it would and she was impressed. However, it seems that there was some dissatisfaction from Hall Committee Members in terms of how things were run and the help received

The following comments, suggestions, etc. were made:

- Need to have a clear person in charge.
- First years need to be reminded that they are expected to clean-up and setup.
- Was last minute, rushing, etc., need better communication, need to work as a team.
- Equity & Institutional Culture Office decided at last minute that it needed to be a Hall talk, and this created some of the problems.
- First years felt that Committee Members were being aggressive in the way they were asking for help.
- First years did not want to stay behind to clean-up even though they were informed before.
- Maybe some first years did not know what to expect. Might be a communication problem.
- First years maybe were not feeling a part of anything. Need to make them feel encouraged and make them feel part, and not just as first years. Include them in everything, the divide between first years and house comm needs to be dissolved, and at the end of the day we should just be students making an event successful.
- Did not communicate properly with the first years.
- Communication can go a long way to make feel people encouraged and part of it, and if students know the expectations beforehand they are much more willing to participate.

Hall Committee Portfolios: It was suggested that we have portfolios like previous years, as it makes things a lot easier. We did not fill these positions at the beginning of the year because of Covid and we were not anticipating that many events etc. Those who are not aware, we have done this in the past whereby within the Hall Committee someone is nominated or volunteers to be the International Rep, Environmental Rep, Community Engagement Rep, Transformation/Awareness Raising Rep, etc., and these members work with the Res structures to facilitate, and ensure better communication.

The responsibilities of a portfolio position basically entails making sure that the various Residence Reps do their jobs, stay in touch with them, have meetings with them, maybe organise Hall initiatives at that level. It is suggested that Hall Committee Members look in the Drostdy Hall leadership booklet under the various specific House Committee portfolios to see what those House Committee Members do, and the Hall Committee Portfolio would make sure that the Res Reps do their portfolios and help them out. It was also suggested to look on the Drostdy Website under the various Hall portfolios to see what was done in previous years. Last year due to Covid nothing was done, but have a look at 2019 and previous years to see what Hall projects and initiatives were done to give you an idea.

These positions need to be filled by students in the Hall Committee so that they can facilitate at a Hall level and can report back at Hall Committee meetings. Candice will send out the list of Hall Portfolios as a shared google document for members to sign up for the various portfolios. This is not you doing all the work, it's more about having meetings with the House Committee Reps to find out what they are doing and link the Hall Committee with what the Residences are doing, and bring us all together as a Hall within those portfolios.

2021.02.08

MID-YEAR LEADERSHIP REFRESHER TRAINING

Normally we have a Hall Committee leadership weekend away at the beginning of the year, and a lot more interaction, but Covid made that difficult this year. The Hall Committee were asked if they want to have some form of leadership refresher training before semester two begins, with members returning on the Friday before third term starts, and on the Saturday have some kind of gathering, within Covid regulations. It was suggested to include House

Committee Members, as many of these students were not here at the beginning of the year due to permits, and some House Committee members are struggling to understand their duties and responsibilities, so we need something to refresh our minds and start semester two with a fresh start. It was also suggested that this training needs to have a team building element. The Hall Committee were in support of this happening.

2021.02.09 DROSTDY WEBSITE

We need to add contact to our website and keep it up to date. If you have not gone onto the website lately go on and have a look under your residence section. Once again, obviously not much happened last year because of Covid, but this year so far we have had a couple of events and initiatives in each Residence, and even at a Hall level. If anyone has taken photos of any events etc. they must please send them to Candice via e-mail or WhatsApp with a short description, blurb, caption or paragraph. Please also ask your Residence students for photos. Look on the website to see what has been done in the past to give you an idea.

From now on as each res has different initiatives and events etc., allocate someone to take photos at each event and send them to Candice straight away. If Candice asks for photos at the end of each term, semester or the end of year, then nobody can find any photos, so please keep this up during the year and continuously send Candice photos and content. There is also a place for news articles so we can do our own news articles just like in a magazine or newspaper, so maybe get journalism students etc. who are interested, e.g. Graham rugby players being part of RU first team, Cameron Marais in the top 5. We can sometimes even ask the students themselves, e.g. ask Dimitri or Cameron to write a little something about their experience at Varsity Shield, and they may be happy to give a photo. This is also very helpful for end of year Hall Awards, e.g. Hall Sports Awards, to be able to look through the website and find all this information.

Celeste also can be involved in the website. Even though they do not have as many events etc. as the undergrad residences, from an academic side, postgrads often publish articles, give talks and presentations, etc., and all of this can be placed on the website. For the Hall Consent Talk we can have a photo of the pillowcases and a write-up about the talk.

2021.02.10 COMMON ROOMS

Sean reported that this might be better received on another platform but it needs to be flagged, and he does not want to be confused with someone not taking the pandemic seriously. Having said that, we need to be careful that we do not have rules in place that make criminals out of law abiding citizens, so largely flagging the common room rule that only allows two people in the common room at a time. That rule does not take into account how large the common room is. This rule needs to be thought about more carefully and students are missing out on a space where they can still meet together. Maybe this is an item to bring up at Board of Residences. The Government rule is based on a fifty percent capacity, and then you have common rooms that can house sixty only allowing two people. This results in the space being underutilised and could be utilised better with Covid protocols in place.

Cath confirmed that this common room rule comes from the declaration. Within your own Residence you can look at the space and decide on how many numbers you could have with the windows open, ventilated and social distancing. A lot of the declaration that students signed at the beginning of the year is not even valid anymore, because RU did not enforce the 10 day limited movement period when students returned from vac, etc. Each Residence to decide within comfort within Covid, depending on how the residence feels. The one rule that is not going away is the not having guests in your room, because the rooms are small.

2021.02.11 HALL GRANT FOR FIRST SEMESTER (2021.01.07)

Given that next weekend is the last weekend for events we are not going to be able to have a Hall event before end of term, even with electing a Hall Senior Student in that time, and this would not give the Hall Senior Student much time to organise. It was noted that brunches and picnics are not allowed, however braais are allowed, and this came firmly down as a directive from Residential Operations. It was agreed to allocate 70% of the first semester grant to the residences, and 30% to the Hall in order to hopefully have a Hall event next semester.

Cath is going on maternity leave from the 1 June and she is still waiting on the DSA and HR to confirm the Acting Hall Warden arrangements. Therefore all the decisions made tonight will be led by the acting Hall Warden. Cath will communicate to everyone when she finds out more.

The meeting ended at 20h10.

Allan Gray House Report

There has been a lot of complaints about hygiene. We have an upcoming braai and the first years attended a consent talk.

CELESTE HOUSE REPORT

Prepared by: Chavalala Ridge

1. Before House Comm elected (March 2021)

We had our first house meet and greet where residents introduced each other's names and played 30 seconds game to get to know each other much better.

We had our first house hike as a way of promoting new friendships (April 2021)

2. After House Comm elected (May 2021)

We will be having our house braai on the 29 May 2021 and new residents that recently joined the house will be introduced to the rest of the residents.



GRAHAM HOUSE REPORT

Environment

- Graham House bought and placed a dust bin for the smoking area adjacent to the Residence.

Sports

- Graham House had 2 of its students participate in the varsity shield. (Cameron Marias and Dimtri Mngqolo)
- Dimitri Mngqolo was appointed as acting sports rep.
- Following the return of sports to campus. Graham House played its first soccer game against Joe Slovo and won 3-2

General Affairs

- A farewell braai for Albert was conducted. Graham House students bid farewell to Albert as the Warden of Graham and welcomed Sean on the braai.
- Graham House attended a hall consent talk where first-years received consent pillows.
- The Res also appointed wellness leaders and had a wellness meeting during the first term.
- Several pieces of equipment in Graham house is broken and is in need of repair.
- Graham House students also requesting plastic wrap for bins for hygiene purposes.
- Graham House opened up vacant house comm positions to students.

Report for Prince Alfred

There's been reduced complains from house comm about general noise levels in res. Bathroom hygiene is still a huge issue. The events we've had this term are a hall consent talk and a braai.



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

To whom it may concern

Proposal to Have pump installed in gray water to Flush toilets

As you will know, Makhanda has been hit by an ongoing drought that has worsened over the last couple of years. We as a house have been thinking of a multiple approach plan to that can eradicate this problem.

We have found ourselves in a situation where majority of students have been called back to university in a time where the water supply in Makhanda has been unfortunate. Almost every second day we find ourselves without water, which inconveniences individuals who have academic commitments and are required to be on campus. A long day of practical's and tutorials is challenging enough, and this is made more burdensome without having started the day afresh with a shower. We believe more can be done to install long lasting solutions to ensure the academic program is not compromised.

Whilst we appreciate the efforts of housekeeping staff and fellow housemates who assist with the water issue by collecting water, carrying them up stairs and placing them in bins for students to then use for toilet purposes. One can argue that "this is their job", but ultimately, carrying twenty liters of water up three flights of stairs every second day is not easy, and we feel this can be avoided. This would also free up staff and students to engage in other tasks.

It is for this reason that, on behalf of Graham House, we would like to humbly request two Jojo tanks, which can possibly be connected to the plumbing, thus eradicating the water issue and weakening the burden on our housekeeping staff. A pumping system can be installed to pump the water from the tanks to in the very least ensure water can be pumped for flushing.

Thank You for taking time out of your schedule to view our request, any feedback you can give on matter this would be greatly appreciated. We would also appreciate being pointed in the direction where we can pursue this humble request.

This pump would also ensure that should the water supply return to normalcy, we are still able to use water wisely.

Kind Regards

Mohammed Bera

2021 Sub warden