



# GSG General Body Meeting Minutes

Start Time: 5:01 pm

Approved Agenda & Minutes from 8.7.18

Minutes Legend
★ Action Item
★ Action Item for All Representatives
Important dates

## Vote

None

## Housing Q&A

Travis Pierce [tlp@mtu.edu](mailto:tlp@mtu.edu)

If you have any ideas please feel free to send them to this e-mail. “My best ideas come from students.”

1. New rent price determined by market prices and need to repay renovation debt
  - a. Worked with Graduate School and GSG to determine per month rate that is realistic for graduate students to pay. Current rates fall within these standards
  - b. Goal is to keep in \$500/\$550 price range per student
  - c. Couches in newly renovated apartment were not chosen to be another sleeping unit. If you have a +1 occupant in your apartment you are encouraged to purchase your own mattress
  - d. DH includes all utilities and maintenance staff in rent cost.
  - e. Market pressure could allow for higher rents.
  - f. Housing generates \$26 million in revenue with \$7 million returned to MTU’s general fund to support students. In addition to general fund contribution housing is responsible for salaries, fringes (benefits such as retirement, healthcare, etc.) and wages of its employees; bond payments (included as operating expenses). Housing pays facilities for its maintenance services and does not have control of their office.

Question: Why did the rent for a newly renovated 2-bedroom apartment increase more than a newly renovated 1-bedroom?

Answer: Pre-renovation rate of 1-bedroom units was on the higher end and the pre-renovation rate of 2-bedroom was really low. This resulted in the larger increase in renovated 2-bedroom apartment rents in order to work toward repaying bonds.

- g. Rates are not going down
- h. Housing does not want to charge additional fee for +1 occupant in an apartment because housing becomes responsible for bedding, desks, dresser, etc. This would increase overall costs.
- i. Current furniture in renovated apartments was standardized with approval from students

Question: Does MTU housing pay property tax to the state of Michigan?

Answer: MTU housing does not pay property taxes since it is technically an extension of state government. This could be used as an argument in the future to slow rent rates increases.

Question: Will there be an increase in the post renovation rates?

Answer: In 16 years of experience on campus rates have always increased each year

Question: Is there a way housing monitors utility usage for each unit?

Answer: Control systems are not in place to monitor individual units, but can monitor a whole buildings usage. Housing is working on making its finances more transparent

- j. No decreases in rent will be occurring, but instead focus on controlling costs to help control future rent increases
  - k. Rent ending on July 31 despite most students leaving campus at end of May. The packaging could be modified to collect 12 months worth of revenue in 10 months and allow students to stay in apartments 2 months for free. At the end of the day this will appear as a rent increase for those 10 months.
  - l. Housing will e-mail out on August 15 a GSG approved housing agreement to help protect student contract holders from covenants who avoid their payment responsibilities.
  - m. If you have a housing contract you are bound to the contract. You can apply for a contract release, but these are rarely given out.
2. Everyone on Campus pays parking fees (those using cars).
    - a. Dan Bennet - Policy commissioner and executive director of university safety and security.
  3. Facilities is not controlled by housing. Any damage charges are assigned by facilities and then applied to your bill by housing. Students can initially protest with Facilities Management and, if necessary, further appeal decisions with housing .

Question: One student had what appeared to be overcharge for cleaning price. Was able to reduce cost by protesting with facilities. Could student come to housing for further appeal?

Answer: Inconsistency in facilities management. Feel free to come talk to me to see if there is

any issues ([tlp@mtu.edu](mailto:tlp@mtu.edu))

★ If anyone would like to review or create a process with Travis, feel free to get in contact with me([tlp@mtu.edu](mailto:tlp@mtu.edu)).

4. To the best of Travis' knowledge the substantive components (terms and conditions) have not received significant changes for this years contacts. Feel free to contact Travis if you find any significant changes between the two years contract (other than new cover page with different rent amount)

## **President's Report**

Apurva Baruah, [gsg-president@mtu.edu](mailto:gsg-president@mtu.edu)

### Superior Ideas Project

- MTU crowdfunding website - Graduate Student Conference Awards
  - Provide additional support to graduate students to attend conferences
  - Target audience - alumni, recipient of GSG travel grants.
  - Award will initially only be granted to students who are presenting
  - For first year will focus attention to senior PhD students
  - ★ Grad students should promote the following link
  - Link to page: <https://www.superiorideas.org/project/grad-student-conference>
  - ★ Grad students can also chat with advisors/department chairs for other contribution options
- ★ If you name is on Member Task list, be sure to take care of it

## **Vice President's Report**

Prathamesh Deshpande, [gsg-vp@mtu.edu](mailto:gsg-vp@mtu.edu)

Absent

- ★ Sign up for Walmart volunteer document
- ★ If you are van certified be sure to contact prathamesh so that he know

### Health Insurance

- Insurance waiver requirements have not changed from last year
- Apurva has been in contact with various groups across campus

## **Secretary's Report**

Jamie Berger, [gsg-secretary@mtu.edu](mailto:gsg-secretary@mtu.edu)

Absent

- Email Jamie if you are not receiving official GSG emails

### **Treasurer's Report**

Sharath Ankathi, [gsg-treasurer@mtu.edu](mailto:gsg-treasurer@mtu.edu)

- Awarded 25 travel grants for the summer
  - Only have received 8 travel vouchers
- Fall travel grants will open in first week of Fall semester

### Update on Current Funds

- Approved Summer Travel Grants \$6053.56
- Budget Spent so far \$459.21 (Softball \$319.60)

### Emergency Fund

- Link available on GSG Website if you need emergency money
- <https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/resources-for/students/academic/emergency-fund/>

### **Academic Chair's Report**

Jacob Blazejewski, [gsg-academic@mtu.edu](mailto:gsg-academic@mtu.edu)

### Alumni Poster Session

- Successful event and got a compliment from the new president

### Upcoming Events

- 3 Minute Thesis Competition November 7
  - ★ Mark this date in your calendars and start thinking of ways to publicize in your departments.
- Lunch 'n Learn/Academic Seminars start in September
- Professional Development Workshops also start in September

### **Social Chair's Report**

Ninad Mohale, [gsg-social@mtu.edu](mailto:gsg-social@mtu.edu)

- Grad orientation picnic
- First Friday Social

★ If you have van certification let Ninad know

### **Public Relations Chair's Report**

Prasad Soman, [gsg-pr@mtu.edu](mailto:gsg-pr@mtu.edu)

## **Softball Coordinator's Report**

Daniel Byrne, [djbyrne@mtu.edu](mailto:djbyrne@mtu.edu)

- Playoffs starting this week
- Picnic after championships

## **Extra Business**

### GSG Insulated Mugs

- Will be purchasing as gifts for large donors to crowdfunding site.
- Some cost will be covered by the graduate school
- ★ Apurva/Jacob/Jamie will create online discussion form for reps to decide whether they would like travel mugs or dedicate the funds towards an experience.

Meeting Adjourned: **6:47 pm**