



[DAY 1] Friday, July 16, 2021 (Present: Mardie Sorensen, Seth Ressler, Kent Pawlak, David Grady, Reatha Cox, Michael Taddesse, Kent Gardner, Howard Farrell, Janet Proffitt, Amanda Jordan, Anne Trask Forcier, Larry Lunsford, Darald Stubbs, Barbie Tootle, Liz Hannan, Katie Kennedy, Ed Whipple, Cheri Wechsler, Tyler Manning, Heidie Lindsey --Sam Waltemeyer attended via Teams)

- **Welcome and introduction – David Grady**
 - Tyler Manning introduced as new Mid-America Region RCD
 - Katie Kennedy (Northwestern State University of Louisiana) introduced as 2021-2022 Student Board Member
 - David Grady presented Katie Kennedy with Omega stole and Board Member pin
 - Liz Hannan (outgoing 2020-2021 Student Board Member) presented Katie with a sweatshirt from her alma mater (University of Southern California) per tradition
 - Tyler Manning was presented with an RCD pin

- **REPORTS:**
 - ***Executive Committee-*** conducted evaluation of the Executive Director earlier in the week. Committee also discussed the possibility of restarting/continuing the annual Order of Omega Recognition Ceremony that was held at the AFA Annual Meeting.
 - ***Internal Affairs-*** committee discussed four (4) areas including finance (to be updated by Howard Farrell), human resources (a full staffing audit with recommendations to the Board), technology (update on implementation of *MyHonorSociety*, and facilities (revisit the possible purchase of property by HQ).
 - *Howard gave update on financial report:* no payroll increases last year, no major changes to proposed budget this year, conference expenses will increase next year, checking account ended in positive (+\$420K). Howard reports that while we have a deficit proposed budget, he is not worried.



- **Governance Committee-** Larry Lunsford discussed the constitutional changes implemented over the last year via chapter vote. Larry also discussed a possible internal Operations Manual. Cheri Wechsler thanked outgoing 2021-2022 Student Board Member Liz Hannan for her input on constitutional updates from her perspective as an undergraduate student. Howard Farrell stated that the organization will need to have an audit done with the results to be reported at the 2022 Summer Board Meeting.
- Discussion was held on the type of audit, frequency of the audit that an organization our size needs.
- **External Relations-** committee discussed the variety of meetings held over 2020 which focused on Order of Omega's identity. Committee also noted that the use of social media has been escalated dramatically, specifically with Instagram. Committee also commented on how our Case Study competitions being held virtually last year kept the organization's brand present. Letters were sent out to Vice Presidents in the Fall semester (2020) with about a dozen replies. Committee also commended Amanda Jordan's work as our Marketing & Communications coordinator.
- **HQ REPORTS:**
 - No major chapter concerns this past year – most questions were related to virtual initiations. Thanks to our chapter at Northwestern State University of Louisiana for creating an outstanding Initiation Ceremony video that a good majority of our chapters used. (Video has about 400 views). HQ also had a fair number of questions from chapters regarding how many members they could initiate this past academic year.
 - **Membership Report (Mike)-** Between July 2020-July 2021, we initiated 8,078 new members (Fall 2020 had 3,982 and Spring 2021 had 4,096). While we had no new chapters chartered, we do have two (2) potential charters on the horizon with Long Island University-Brooklyn and New Jersey City University, both in Northeast Region. We had 19 chapters reactivate over the last year. HQ also completed a virtual initiation ceremony in June 2021 for the Washington D.C. chapter of the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), 16 honorary members were inducted.



- **VOTE: Motion by Howard Farrell to extend the unlimited number of initiates per chapter for one more academic year (2021-2022). Motion seconded by Darald Stubbs. No discussion. All in favor, no nays. MOTION PASSED.**

- **Programs Report (Mardie)**- Mardie thanked Tyler Manning for his assistance in setting up the technology for the virtual Case Study competitions during the regional conferences. AFLV combined West and Central last year, and it was held over the course of a month. NGLA had 7 teams in 2 tracks. SGLA was held in-person in Atlanta, GA, and Darald Stubbs was present representing Order of Omega. HQ held a virtual exhibit hall for the conferences. All other annual awards i.e. Outstanding Chapter, Outstanding Professional/Advisor, Chapter Programming Grants, were suspended as a cost saving initiative due to the COVID pandemic.
- **Technology Report (Kent Pawlak)**- Kent gave overview of *MyHonorSociety* (MHS) which went into production in late Fall 2020 with Northwestern State University of Louisiana being our first test chapter in November 2020. MHS was expanded to other chapters in Spring 2021 during which time over 30 chapters utilized it and 570 new members were processed through the portal. All chapters will have to transition and use MHS starting in Fall 2021. Kent also gave updates on the sales figures for our Omega Store (Shopify) which saw a 21% increase over previous year with an average order value of \$83 (which was up 38% from previous year). Kent provided an update on the backend working order of our website (via WordPress) stating that traffic on the website has remained consistent with previous two years averaging about 9,000 unique visitors per month. Kent updated the group on plan to resume computer purchase rotation at HQ since we suspended purchases in 2020. Three computers will be purchased and installed at HQ this Fall.



- **Marketing & Communications Report (Amanda)**- Amanda reported on the welcome emails we have been sending all new members registered with HQ. She also discussed the increased use of social media, particularly with Instagram as we've seen that the vast majority of our demographic utilize Instagram more than any other SM platform. Amanda discussed virtual connections and outreach which included graphics and video posts to increased engagement with students/our chapters. Future plans for Instagram center around more videos (videos have the highest rates of engagement) and plans to increase the involvement of the Student Board Member in this endeavor. Amanda went over the proposed marketing budget. Howard Farrell congratulated Amanda for her marketing efforts. Amanda will be emailing everyone with a .PDF copy of the 2020-2021 Alpha & Omega which will have a home on the website soon thereafter.

- **AFA Update with Executive Director, Jason Bergeron:**
 - AFA continues to have many discussions centering around the fraternal movement and its purpose as it stands today.
 - Working on elevating the professional standards of the Fraternity/Sorority profession.
 - Key areas of elevating standards include developing professional competency to credential this profession, staying relevant in terms of growth and inclusion/equity.
 - AFA is actively discussing the rash of F/S professionals leaving the profession. "Change isn't necessarily baked into our DNA."
 - There's a fair amount of nervousness surrounding the return to campus especially from a mental health perspective.
 - The AFA-Order of Omega partnership is critical as we work to increase community engagement, and there's a role for Order of Omega to assist with that.
 - The Case Study competitions hosted by Order of Omega help to develop the professional competency.



- **Board Appointments:**
 - Up for Board appointments are Larry Lunsford, Barbie Tootle, Ed Whipple, Howard Farrell, and David Grady.
 - David Grady and Howard Farrell will be on a 4-year appointment, the remaining re-appointments are for 3-years.
 - **VOTE – Motion by Darald Stubbs to re-appoint all, motion seconded by Anne Trask Foricer, all in favor (no nays) – MOTION PASSES.**
 - Kent Pawlak led discussion on make-up of the Board moving forward, in regard to diversity, expertise, etc.

- **Summer Board Meeting 2022:**
 - Proposed dates are- July 14-17, 2022, or July 21-24, 2022.
 - Proposed locations- Will be determined following Board quarterly meetings starting Sept. 14, with final vote on date.

- **Case Study budget allocations:**
 - Mardie proposed that we continue with Case Study competitions, board agreed.

- **Scholarship/Fellowship Report (Reatha Cox):**
 - Reatha recommends that the annual undergraduate scholarship application period remains during the Spring semester for at least one more academic year. She recommends the Master’s/Doctoral Fellowship period remain during the Fall semester.
 - Student Board Members (Liz Hannan and Katie Kennedy) both gave feedback stating that the Spring semester would be better for undergraduate students to apply for scholarships.
 - Board accepts moving scholarships to Spring semester for one more year (will review next year at Summer Board Meeting0 -- and fellowships staying in Fall semester (award winners to be announced at AFA Annual Meeting).



- **Quarterly Meetings with Board:**
 - Instead of monthly check-in meetings, Board wants to have virtual quarterly meetings with all leading up to the 2022 Summer Board Meeting.
 - HQ staff will set up these quarterly meeting via Microsoft Teams and send out to Board, HQ, and RCDs.
 - Proposed dates are:
 - **September 14, 2021**
 - **December 14, 2021**
 - **April 5, 2022**
 - All times are 4:30 p.m. CST

- ***DAY 1 OF MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:45 PM***



[DAY 2] Saturday, July 17, 2021 (Present: Mardie Sorensen, Seth Ressler, Kent Pawlak, David Grady, Reatha Cox, Michael Taddesse, Kent Gardner, Howard Farrell, Anne Trask Forcier, Larry Lunsford, Darald Stubbs, Barbie Tootle, Liz Hannan, Katie Kennedy, Ed Whipple, Michael Shonrock, Cheri Wechsler, Tyler Manning, Heidie Lindsey --Sam Waltemeyer attended via Teams)

- **Student Board Member project update:**

- Liz Hannan (outgoing 2020-2021 SBM) gave group update on her project over the last year that centered around social media engagement, particularly with Instagram. She worked alongside Marketing coordinator, Amanda Jordan to help craft specific videos and content targeted at our undergraduate members via Instagram.
- Liz also served on the Governance committee to help update the Constitution and Bylaws.
- Liz commented on the need for future Student Board Members to be able to leverage social media engagement opportunities, particularly as campus life is trending towards being more hybrid (a mix of virtual and in-person).
- Liz also pointed out that future Student Board Members will also need to be able to help Order of Omega assess how chapters are functioning across different types of campuses, particularly at urban-area chapters.
- David Grady presented Liz Hannan with traditional Order of Omega clock.

-BREAK-

- **Budget items:**

- David Grady gave update on recent Executive committee meeting regarding a recommendation for a staff merit pay increase of \$27,284.
- **[VOTE] Howard Farrell moved to pass this \$27,284 merit increase for staff, Barbie Tootle seconded, no discussion, Anne Trask Forcier abstained from vote, all others voted yes – MOTION PASSED.**
- Howard presented a proposed 2021-2022 operating budget.
 - Includes \$4,500 for marketing and communications
 - Includes \$27,284 for staff merit pay increase



- Total proposed budget is \$684,359.00
- **[VOTE] Howard moved to pass this proposed budget, seconded by Larry Lunsford, no discussion, all vote yes – MOTION PASSED.**

- **Trends and Issues:**

- Need to look at our position statements
- What is the best/most effective way to market Omega?
- What is Omega's role as it relates to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)?
- Everyone split into three groups to discuss these items.
 - Group 1: Kent G., Michael Shonrock, Mike T., Liz, Larry, Tyler, David
 - Group 2: Howard, Seth, Sam, Anne, Darald, Heidie
 - Group 3: Reatha, Mardie, Kent P., Cheri, Ed, Barbie

- *Actions items from groups:*

- Every chapter should get two (2) free honorary member slots – no cost for 2
- Board Structure – look at term limits and adding new board members
- Look over undergraduate membership selection criteria to make sure they are still equitable for all
- DEIA statement and implementation of a task force to audit Omega
- Reinstate the annual Recognition reception at the AFA Annual Meeting
 - Look at new locations maybe outside of conference hotel
 - Cut down on speech time to focus more on personal engagement
 - Market to the young crop of advisors that make up significant portion of our chapter advisors.
- Make sure our website is current and accessible in terms of content and accessibility
- Need to conduct a staff assessment to see if group is working at maximum efficiency



- Continue to work on strategic engagement with new members
 - Look into hiring a consultant to help group audit efficiency and to help assess purpose
 - Continue to look at collaborative partnership opportunities so that Omega remains relevant
 - All groups emphasized a need to assess what Order of Omega's purpose is today.
- **Committee recommendations:**
 - *Executive committee-*
 - Explore finding someone to conduct an organizational assessment, preferably someone with higher education experience
 - *Internal Affairs Committee-*
 - Technology:
 - modernize computing equipment
 - replace aging HQ telephone systems (Kent Pawlak).
 - Replace any out-of-warranty technological equipment (Kent P).
 - Upgrade Wi-Fi at HQ (Kent P).
 - Enhance cloud services (Kent P).
 - Make website lean more towards video (Kent P and Amanda).
 - 3rd party accessibility audit of website
 - Research potential integration of MHS and QuickBooks (Kent P)
 - **Staff audit – committee recommends hiring auditor to assess staffing needs, to begin immediately. Recommendations for this by next quarterly meeting (Sept. 14)**



- *External Affairs Committee-*
 - Website content needs to be audited to make sure it's including inclusive language. Recommend an audit, possibly by end of year.
 - AFA Recognition reception – recommend working with AFA to schedule it for 2021 in Dallas.
 - Look at new locations maybe outside of conference hotel
 - Cut down on speech time to focus more on personal engagement
 - Market to the young crop of advisors that make up significant portion of our chapter advisors.
 - Recommend drafting a DEIA position statement – develop a draft by Sept. 14th quarterly meeting.
 - Recommend implementing a DEIA task force by the AFA Annual Meeting. Announce formation of the DEIA task force at the Recognition reception.
 - Identify potential task force members to include stakeholders in Omega.
 - Savannah Miller, *undergraduate student at the University of Kentucky who was a Student Board Member applicant in 2021.*
 - Lamar Bryant – University of Tennessee at Knoxville
 - Dr. Austin Lane – Chancellor of Southern Illinois University
 - Mallory Payan – University of Texas at El Paso
 - Cassandra Joseph – University of Houston
 - Guillermo Flores – Digital Media Director at Sig Ep HQ
 - M. Spencer Hudec – Purdue University
 - Will Cangialosi – The Ohio State University
 - Than Oo – Thiel College
 - Huong Truong – Emory University
 - Vinicius Vargas – University of Texas at Arlington
 - Adam Wong – University of La Verne
 - Kriskumar Singh – Emory University
 - Nelda Bailey – University of South Carolina



- Valencia Walls – University of Southern Mississippi
 - Sabina Ramirez – University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
 - Veronica H. Moore – Director of Ed Programs, Delta Upsilon fraternity
 - Scarlett M. Alonzo – Executive Vice President, NALFO
 - Jennifer Jones, Immediate Past President, NPHC
- *Governance Committee-*
 - Recommends doing more research on implementation of Board of Directors term limits, perhaps with help of a consultant.
 - Recommends onboarding a new member of the Board of Directors every summer for next 3-4 years especially since Board just reappointed 5 members in 2021.
 - Membership selection criteria – discussed GPA requirement. Perhaps create a national selection rubric that is used across all chapters (must make sure it is inclusive and equitable for all).
 - Committee is working on policy handbook
 - Working on definition of emeritus within organization
- All groups need to send worksheets to Mardie so that we can outline and prioritize action items and responsibilities.
 - Group given final instructions on dinner tonight at 7pm at Piaf Restaurant.
 - ***Meeting adjourned at 3pm***