

Alumni Fraternity Members:

During our meeting on October 12 and in a follow up email, I promised that I would provide an update to you after we developed our plans for the future of Fraternity Housing at UCM *and* after we communicated this plan to the current collegians.

Sunday night (November 10), Vice President Shari Bax, leadership from UCM Housing, and I had an opportunity to meet with current leadership of our Fraternity chapters. Also in attendance were a number of alumni members/advisors. During this meeting, I described the following plan:

- The Fraternity Complex will be closed. The initial timeline we developed for complete closure was May, 2021. However, as noted below, this timeline has been modified because of a recent mechanical systems failure.
- On-campus Fraternity housing will be relocated to Fitzgerald Hall. Fitzgerald Hall has five floors with a total of 10 wings currently totaling 310 beds.
- Fitzgerald will need to be renovated to create individual chapter rooms and provide some additional modifications appropriate for Fraternity Housing. We are in the process of obtaining engineering estimates to determine how best to create chapter rooms and ensure a chapter's total space (including residence rooms) is clearly and distinctly segmented within Fitzgerald. This need for renovation and construction means Fitzgerald will not be available for occupancy until summer 2021.
- Because of the size of Fitzgerald, and depending on how many chapters request accommodations within this facility, we may reserve remaining wings for other types of housing. However, as noted in the previous point, the accommodations/space for a Fraternity chapter will be clearly and distinctly segmented.
- While we recognize Fitzgerald is structurally different than the Fraternity Complex and is likely less preferable to having a new facility and/or being able to recreate some of the design elements in the Complex, we believe this is the best alternative approach we can provide at this time. We intend to work closely with those chapters who commit to being housed in Fitzgerald to ensure we've received input and feedback on the accommodations (including the Chapter room space).

The timeline we originally developed had to be reconsidered during last week. A little over a week ago, our in-ground heating source for the Complex had a failure. Over this past week, we were able to utilize the rooftop heating units to maintain the temperature in the Complex. With sustained colder temperatures, however, we will not be able to adequately maintain the temperature at a level we believe to be appropriate.

Our preliminary estimates from an external company indicate repairing this system will be lengthy and costly. The length of time required for the repair alone would require us to relocate the men who reside in the Complex. Further, the cost, coupled with our initial plan to shut down the Complex no later than May, 2021, means we will not

proceed with the system repair. This will allow us to preserve funding for Fitzgerald Hall renovations. Unfortunately, this means we must immediately relocate the current Complex residents to other Halls on campus.

Housing has identified space in Fitzgerald Hall and Ellis which will allow chapters to remain together (including allowing for single rooms for men who currently have paid for singles). We will start and complete relocations by Sunday (November 17). Once these moves have occurred, we will no longer house residents at the Fraternity Complex. We are also working with individual chapters on how to access and/or relocate chapter rooms that are in the Fraternity Complex. We will also develop a one-year plan for Academic Year 2020-2021 given Fitzgerald will be closed for renovations. The chapters will be able to share more information with you as these and other plans are solidified as we will be communicating with the chapters regularly.

We are also aware that individual chapters are exploring the possibility of having off campus housing. As discussed during our October meeting, this is certainly an option for chapters.

During Sunday's meeting with current Fraternity leaders and alumni, many questions were asked, concerns were expressed, and ideas were provided. Because of length, this email does not adequately address the scope of the comments and questions generated by the attendees, which means you may have thoughts you would like to share. If you have questions or comments/concerns, do let me know.

Thanks, again, for your engagement,
-Roger

--

Roger J. Best, President
University of Central Missouri
Administration Building, Suite 202
Warrensburg, Missouri 64093
(660) 543-4112
@UCMPresident