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Dorm dwellers demand changes

By KELI OSBORN
Of the Emerald

University Pres. William Boyd urged faculty and staff to be kind to students at a University Assembly meeting last month. Now, some dormitory residents are taking him at his word.

"Many are lost to us because they have preventable bad experiences on this campus," Boyd told his audience. Members of the Dormitory Governance Committee (DGC) agree, adding that some of those "bad experiences" are with University housing.

Committee members Don Sturgill and Scott Bassett joined

now, but it does seem to me that what they are proposing is fairer."

Ralph Sunderland, University management and budget director, says the University applies the dormitories-generated interest to incidental fees because of an ASUO recommendation about two years ago.

"Since a student deposit was involved, we went to the ASUO," he says. "They recommended we apply it to an EMU budget deficit and, in the future, use it for a reduction of the incidental fees."

Herrera, the current ASUO policy-maker, is on the side of the DGC on this issue and says he supports a policy change. Boyd



ASUO Pres. Ramon Herrera in a meeting with Boyd Wednesday to discuss what they consider some of the more important issues facing dorm residents.

"We've developed a lot of issues and now they're getting more exposure than ever before," Bassett says. The exposure is important, he adds, to create an awareness that change is possible.

"We've got to do it now, before the end of the term, so people will know they have a chance to make a difference. They need to know they have vested interests before it no longer matters."

Improved telephone service in the dorms, better food in the cafeterias and re-allocation of interest money from University housing deposits are only a few of the issues the committee is considering.

Interest monies from the housing deposits are currently used to reduce incidental fees for all students, something dorm residents find unfair, according to Sturgill and Bassett.

"The DGC feels that since since this money comes directly from University-housed students, it should be used to benefit them directly," Sturgill says.

That interest could be used to make housing improvements, such as building study rooms in dorm basements and adding lighting to the nearby parking lots, the committee recommends.

Boyd agrees, at least tentatively. "I don't know why it is as it is

says he's unsure of the process needed to make such a change, promising he will meet with his staff to discuss the issue.

Sturgill and Bassett, both dorm residents, claim that public phone service in student housing is now very poor. In most dorms one public phone is provided for about 80 residents and is located such that few incoming calls are received.

Don Moon Lee, assistant director for University housing, says the phone issue is a recurring one his office works on "all the time."

But the housing office hasn't been working hard enough on the issue, according to Bassett. "The phone company tells them it's not possible to improve the situation and they give up," he says.

Boyd says a meeting with phone company officials is in order. "I often see phone company ads in professional trade magazines saying, 'Let us help you.' I'd like to talk with them about how they might improve the dorm situation," he says.

Boyd says he hopes to set up a meeting of dorm residents, University and phone company officials for early next term.

The request for more co-ed dorms is not unreasonable, Boyd says, but he will have to discuss the possibility with his staff. "If we could come closer to the needs of students, then that is what we want to do."

The meeting was termed encouraging by Herrera, but he says, "The key will be if it can be converted into real action."

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