ASC investigating committee hears pleas to retain Greeks

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ALFRED — Fraternities and sororities at Alfred State College should be allowed to exist was the overall opinion expressed during Wednesday’s public hearing by the Greek Investigation Committee.

More than 200 people, mostly members of the Greek system, were at the hearing and all said the system should remain.

The investigating committee was formed by college President John Hunter because of incidents in which fraternities were involved with injury to students and alcohol problems.

Committee Chairman David Schwert read a letter from Hunter at the beginning of the hearing which stated that the committee was formed because the school cares.

"The basic question before the college community is if there is sufficient redeeming value and useful purpose to warrant continued recognition and development of Greek social organizations at ASC," said Hunter in the letter.

"The commission's job will be to answer this question and decide what to do if it is so or not."

During February the commission heard testimony from Lee Alley, vice president of student services; past and present presidents of the faculty advisors to the Greek Council; the Alfred village police department; the ASC department of public safety, and presidents of three of the five recognized Greek houses.

The hearing was for the committee to hear testimony from the ASC community.

What they heard was a plea to keep the Greek houses at ASC not prosecute all fraternities and sororities for the actions of a few, and not ignore the positive things they do for the school and the community.

"The commission was very impressed with the quality of the presentations," Schwert said. "It was a chance to hear the other side of the story. And the students presented that quite well."

"One of the things that have stayed the same over the years is the values, ideals, and beliefs of brotherhood and sisterhood of the Greek houses," said a Gamma Theta Gamma brother. "The bonds I have with my fraternity brothers is as strong, if not stronger, than that which I have with my brother by blood."

More than 200 people, mostly fraternity and sorority members, attended Alfred State College Greek Investigation Committee’s open hearing Wednesday to listen to or give testimony concerning the future of Greek organizations at ASC. Student Mike Bradley, right, gives his testimony to the committee.
“We have done many things for the school and the community of Alfred such as anti-drug and -alcohol programs, house parties for small children, clothing and food drives for the needy, fund drives in which proceeds went to local charities, and we have cleaned up the campus several times.

“My fraternity has been here for over 70 years and I think I speak for all Greeks when I say, you can take away our charter but you can never break the bonds that hold us together as one.”

Dawn Bottie, a teacher for the Rochester school district, and a 1986 alumni of Alpha Beta Chi, said she came to the hearing to represent a bond that will last her whole life.

“The Greeks give back to the community which gave us a home, through community service and by supporting local businesses. We have done nothing but positive things here,” Bottie said. “We are special and strong and the administration needs to recognize our power and work with that instead of attacking us.”

Alumni Terry Scott of Alpha Beta Chi said she hopes the committee can choose to not only see a few poor examples of society but look also beyond the greater picture of what Greeks are all about.

“We have provided community services to the Alfred area such as a dance marathon for the American Cancer Society, canned food drives during Thanksgiving, and Big Brother/Big Sister Programs,” Scott said. “All in all the Greek society not only benefits the individual, but the whole Alfred community.”

“We are willing to work with the college because the college is the only common link that holds the fraternities and sororities together,” said Charles Ash, a Delta Omega alumni brother. “It breaks my heart that the college doesn’t want to have anything to do with the fraternities and sororities anymore.

“If there are a few rotten eggs in the crowd that get in trouble, prosecute the rotten eggs, don’t prosecute the whole system.”

Psi Delta Omega brother Jeff Feeley said the bond that exists between any Greek house is incredible and he wanted everyone to have an equal chance to experience it.

Feeley also said it was unfair to punish the whole because of the actions of a few.

“Why is it that if one person does something wrong, they can look at me and the rest of the fraternity and say you guys are all bad, you guys are obnoxious drunkards, you don’t do anything good around here,” Feeley said. “Punish the individuals as an individual not as a group.”

Eric Albrecht, Psi Delta Omega member, told the committee, “If you want us to cooperate with you, we have to know what you want. We are more than happy to cooperate, but it is hard to do if we don’t know what is expected of us. All we are asking is some cooperation.”

Other comments from students asked for more publicity on the good things the Greeks do.

“Lately the only press the Greeks have been getting is bad, what about the good that they do?” said one student.

Never seeing a faculty or staff member at Greek Council meetings was another concern.

“We need better communications between the Greeks and the school,” said another student.

The committee will hear from a few more people in March before making a decision.