

Students' rent to increase

HUB tenants get reprieve...

by Mike Walker

HUB student tenants have successfully postponed rent increases in the HUB apartment complex, but the Board of Governors approved rent increases Friday in all other university-owned housing.

The increases effective this fall range from 6 percent for some Michener Park residents to 20 percent for those living at Faculte St. Jean (the U of A's French language campus).

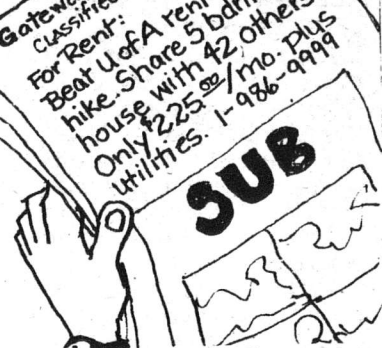
The Michener Park increases are lower than others because married students with children living in row houses have been excused from the university's overall requirement that housing break even.

Lister Hall, Pembina Hall and the North Garneau housing community are the other locations affected by the increases, which the university says reflect steadily rising costs, particularly for utilities.

The increases are also part of a continuing effort to break even on housing and food services. Even so, next year's projected deficit will still be about \$370,000.

HUB apartment tenants originally were faced with an 8 to 12 percent increase. The HUB Tenants' Association (HTA), however, lobbied vigorously against the increases, on the grounds that HUB apartments (excluding commercial mall) were budgeted to make \$146,000 next year. This year they turned a profit of \$180,000.

HUB tenants argued against the University's policy which



forces them to subsidize money-losing operations, such as Lister Hall. Lister loses almost as much as HUB makes each year.

What gained them a reprieve, though, was the Tenants' Association's survey of highrise apartment rents in the university area. The HTA found that although apartments in College Plaza, Garneau Towers and Campus Towers are more

expensive than in HUB, almost all are cheaper on a per-square-foot basis.

In addition, the private apartments have such extras as saunas and swimming pools.

The HUB rent proposal will not go back to the Board Finance Committee for further consideration, to be resubmitted to the Board in April.

But, said Finance Committee chairperson Ted Allen, "I'm not convinced (square-footage costs are) the only measure that's relevant," he said. "The expensive components go into an apartment regardless of its size."

...but everyone pays for food

The Board of Governors approved increases in food charges for students living in university residences Friday, even though current charges are already well above student loan guidelines.

Students living in Lister Hall, Pembina Hall, and Faculte St. Jean residence will be forced to pay \$200 more next year for the board portion of their residence fees, bringing board charges to \$1,300, \$1,150 and \$1,400 respectively, for eight month terms.

The increase is part of Housing and Food Service's plan to gradually eliminate its overall deficit — a projected \$270,000 next year.

SU president and Board member Nolan Astley spoke against the increases. "This is the second year in a row we've been asked to approve substantial rate increases," he said.

He said the increases of between 17 and 21 percent were above the inflation rate, and that "the rates exceed the Students' Finance Board (SFB) loan guidelines substantially."

He pointed out to the Board, and earlier to the Board Finance Committee, that the SFB loan guideline for accommodation this year is \$110 per month. Current charges in Lister Hall exceed this guideline by \$27 per month, Pembina Hall by \$9 per month and Faculte St. Jean by \$40 per month.

Next fall, Astley said, assuming a 12 percent increase in the guideline to compensate for inflation, the differences will be even larger: \$40 per month at Lister Hall, \$20 at Pembina Hall, and \$52 at Faculte St. Jean.

He said these discrepancies are particularly important since about 40 percent of U of A students have student loans of some size, and "the percentage of

students on student aid in residences is higher than elsewhere."

Board Finance Committee chairperson Ted Allan said the fault lies with the SFB, not with the university.

"Those guidelines are just not realistic," he said. "The Finance Committee passed a motion directing the administration to work with students in making a proposal to the Students' Finance Board... that it reappraise its guidelines, get them on a realistic basis."

"Presumably, the Board



For these prices it better be Russian caviar," he said.

University president Myer Horowitz said the university administration would get to work with the Students' Union on the proposal right away.

North Garneau

Continued from page 1

accommodations... (and necessary services for residents)," he said. This, he added, would preclude any parkade or any large number of tennis courts.

"I really don't know why there's such suspicion that I might change my positions," he said. However, he added that the Board of Governors will have the final say at its April 10 meeting.

SU president-elect Phil Soper said, "That is not the kind of talk that has been going on in the bureaucratic structure."

"I'm very reassured by Dr. Horowitz's comments," he said, but he went on to point out that current plans include six tennis courts, wire fences, and a massive carpark.

He accused administration officials of manipulating the

North Garneau development steering committee, which has one student member, into considering administration goals before the quality of new housing.

The steering committee originally had two student members, but North Garneau tenants' Association president Pat Frewer resigned to protest this treatment.

Soper called on students and the university community to take power from the planners: "Let's not let overzealous planners

destroy what is out only university housing community."

Facilities development committee member Bryan Achtem accused senior administrators of refusing to discuss the facts openly with students: "Somebody knows what they're planning to do, but they will not discuss the plans," he said.

Board of Governors chairman John Schlosser and vice-president of facilities and services Ron Phillips were present but did not speak.

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