M-203 Additional Readings & Resources
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Additional Readings
Reading #1: Meeting Myth-Understandings
By Jim Slaughter, ESQ.
Common Ground, January/February 2003

If your meetings always seem to go wrong in the same ways, it’s time to bury some dead-tired myths.

Different chairs running different meetings in different community associations make the same mistakes. These mistakes are often the result of "meeting myths" that have taken on a life of their own. Things are done a certain way either because "they've always been done that way" or because they're "supposed" to be done that way.

Unfortunately, as the Porgy & Bess song says: "It ain't necessarily so." Some rules are made to be broken—especially when they aren't really rules in the first place.

In this spirit, what follows are meeting myths that need to be put to rest. If you can eliminate one improper practice a month over the next year, your meetings will be faster, fairer, and more effective.

**MYTH: We don't use parliamentary procedure.**
Actually, you do. Whether you're aware of it or not, both your board meetings and your annual meetings follow parliamentary procedure. Courts have held that all organizations are subject to the principles and rules of common parliamentary law. In other words, boards, committees, and assemblies all must observe proper rules when meeting to transact business.

Many associations also adopt a rule that they will follow a particular procedural book, such as Robert's Rules of Order, during meetings. Members who act contrary to the rules they have adopted can be held liable for their actions. As a result, ignoring or incorrectly applying parliamentary procedure can lead to embarrassment and lawsuits.

**MYTH: Parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order are the same thing.**
Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (Tenth Edition) (RONR) is simply the most popular of several parliamentary books. Another well-known authority is The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure (Fourth Edition), often referred to simply as Sturgis, after its original author, Alice Sturgis.

For the novice, Sturgis is a much easier book from which to learn procedure. But the fact that RONR is the most-used parliamentary book and the easiest to locate argues in its favor as a parliamentary authority—and, indeed, it's an excellent resource, with sections on presiding, the duties of officers, taking minutes, running elections, writing and amending bylaws, and holding board and committee meetings. Just be sure to buy the right book; there are
numerous "clones" and earlier editions that are easy to buy by mistake.

**MYTH: Rules are the same for all meetings.**
The level of procedure usually varies with the size of the assembly. You should keep large annual meetings fairly formal, for example, because informal discussion is impractical due to the number of members present; you have to limit debate simply to keep the meeting on time. Plus, formal votes help avoid legal challenges.

In contrast, because formality can hinder business in a meeting of fewer than about a dozen, you can take a lighter approach with smaller boards and committees. According to *RONR*, in smaller bodies:

- Members are not required to obtain the floor and can make motions or speak while seated.
- Motions need not be seconded.
- There is no limit to the number of times a member can speak to a question, and motions to close or limit debate generally are not used.
- The chair usually can make motions and vote on all questions.

Some smaller boards dislike the informality suggested by *RONR* and follow a more formal procedure at all meetings—and even informal boards should be more formal on matters of sufficient importance or controversy.

**MYTH: The absence of a quorum is okay if nobody brings it up.**
Not true! A quorum is the number of voting members who must be present to have a valid meeting. This number is typically established by statute or the governing documents. One of the quickest paths to serious trouble is to ignore your quorum requirements.

The general rule is that any business transacted without a quorum (except for a few procedural motions) is null and void, regardless of whether a member raises the issue. While some state laws allow for a meeting to start with a quorum and to continue after a quorum leaves, this is very different from not having a quorum in the first place.

**MYTH: Discussion first, motion later.**
If your board is following formal procedure, no discussion should occur without being preceded by a motion to take action. A motion is a formal proposal for consideration and action. In formal meetings, every item of business—whether a proposal to construct a new building or to take a five-minute break—needs a motion.
MOTION MADNESS

Perhaps the biggest meeting myth is that there are too many motions in parliamentary procedure. Granted, RONR lists more than 84 variations, but you can get through most of your business with about a dozen motions.

**MAIN MOTION:** brings business before the assembly and is permitted only when no other motion is pending. You can resolve many issues with this one motion. If you like the proposal, speak in favor of it and vote for the main motion. If you dislike the proposal, speak against and vote against the main motion.

**AMENDMENT:** allows modifications to another motion by adding, deleting, or changing words.

**REFER:** allows a matter to be sent to a committee to consider and report back.

**POSTPONE:** delays consideration of a matter to a specific time or date.

**LIMIT DEBATE:** places a limit on the time of the debate and/or the number of speakers permitted.

**PREVIOUS QUESTION:** ends debate immediately.

**RECESS:** permits a short break.

**ADJOURN:** ends the meeting.

**POINT OF ORDER:** calls attention to an error in procedure.

**POINT OF INFORMATION:** allows a member to ask a question.

**DIVISION OF THE ASSEMBLY:** demands a standing (but not counted) vote after a voice vote.

**MYTH: Seconds are vital.**

While seconds serve a useful purpose, they should not be overemphasized. A second implies that at least one other person wants to discuss a matter. In formal gatherings, such as annual meetings, a second determines whether a proposal will go into discussion. If there is no second, there should be no further action on the proposal.
However, most parliamentary books provide that after any debate on an issue, the lack of a second is irrelevant. After a vote, the fact that a motion was never seconded can also be ignored. Indeed, in smaller boards, seconds aren't even required.

**MYTH: Vote on all reports.**
Committee reports are often prepared for information purposes only. In such instances, no motion is necessary following the report. A motion "to adopt" or "to accept" a report is seldom wise except when the report is to be published in your association's name.

On the other hand, if the committee has a specific recommendation for action, the reporting member should end with a motion. For example, if your budget committee has studied the question of hiring a new management company, in her report your committee chair might explain the committee's position and close by saying, "On behalf of the committee, I move that the association retain ABC Management pursuant to the terms of the proposed contract."

**MYTH: A motion is always necessary.**
Non-controversial matters can sometimes be resolved without the usual requirement of a motion and vote, through "general consent" (also known as "unanimous consent"). Under this method, following a motion (or sometimes even without one), the presiding officer asks, "Is there any objection to...?" and pauses to see if there is any objection. For example, "Is there any objection to ending debate?" If no one objects, debate is closed. If a member objects, the matter should be resolved with a motion and vote.

General consent allows you to move quickly through non-controversial issues, so you can spend more time on controversial issues. You can adopt reports and motions, approve minutes, and end debate with general consent.

A similar concept is the "consent agenda," a group of items often placed on the regular agenda near the start of the meeting. The consent agenda should include all non-controversial items, such as the adoption of the minutes. Any member can request that an item be removed from the consent agenda and transferred to the regular agenda for consideration and vote. The remaining consent agenda items are then unanimously approved as a unit without discussion.

**MYTH: The maker of a motion gets to speak first and last.**
The maker of a motion has the right to speak first. After that, the maker has no more rights than anyone else with regard to the motion.
MYTH: Anyone can speak.
Meetings are for members. Unless there is a rule to the contrary, only members of the particular body are allowed to speak, make motions, or vote. Only your board members have a right to participate at board meetings, and only your association members have a right to participate at membership meetings. While an assembly can then permit anyone to speak, no one but members can demand that right.

MYTH: A "friendly amendment" is okay.
Some associations allow any two members to amend a motion on the floor, as long as the change is "friendly" to the original maker of the motion. Such a procedure is unfair.

Once a motion has been stated by the presiding officer, it belongs to the assembly. At that point, the maker has no more right than any other member to change the motion. Instead of using friendly amendments, the proper practice would be to use unanimous consent ("If there is no objection to this change,...") or to require that the amendment be made formally.

MYTH: We have "old business."
What is sometimes misnamed "old business" is actually "unfinished business." Unfinished business refers to questions carried over from the previous meeting and includes:

(1) any matter that was pending when the previous meeting adjourned;
(2) any matter on the previous meeting's agenda that was not reached; or
(3) any matter that was postponed to the present meeting.

The presiding officer will know if there are items of unfinished business. As a result, your presiding officer does not need to ask, "Is there any unfinished business?" Instead, the presiding officer simply states the question on the first item. If there is no unfinished business, you can skip this category.

MYTH: Calling "Question!" stops all business.
The motion to close debate is regularly mishandled. In some groups, a person simply yelling "Question!" from the audience can prompt action. In other groups, the making of the motion automatically ends debate. Both procedures are wrong.

The motion to close debate is just another motion. A person wanting to close debate must be recognized by the chair, and the motion must have a second. While the motion to close debate itself is not debatable, it does require a two-thirds vote. Only the entire assembly—the board at a board meeting, or the members at an annual meeting—decides when to end debate.
MYTH: "Lay on the table" gets rid of sticky issues.
The purpose of the "table" motion is to temporarily delay a matter when something else of urgency arises. Once the urgent matter is over, the group can then resume the matter that was tabled. Because the motion to table is not debatable and only requires a majority vote, you should not use it to get rid of a matter. In fact, *RONR* provides that the motion—which in its full form is called "lay on the table"—should be ruled out of order if the evident intent is to kill or avoid dealing with a measure.

MYTH: The chair runs the meetings.
The chair is the servant of the assembly, not its master. Put another way, the chair can only get away with what the assembly allows.

During a meeting, any member can raise a "point of order" if it's believed that the rules of the assembly are being violated. This motion can interrupt a speaker and does not require a second. For example:

*Member:* Point of order!  
*Chair:* What is your point of order?  
*Member:* We are about to move to a new topic, but we haven't voted on the last motion.

The chair must now rule on the point of order. If the chair doesn't know how to rule, the question can be submitted to the assembly for a vote. If a member is not happy with the chair's ruling, any two members can appeal the decision. By one member's making and another member's seconding the appeal, any question of parliamentary law can be taken from the chair and given to the assembly for decision. The assembly is the ultimate decider of procedural questions during a meeting.

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Proper procedure alone won't solve your meeting problems. Even so, why encumber your board and annual meeting with practices that shouldn't be followed in the first place? Burying these myths will bring your meetings more in line with proper procedure and might even make them shorter and more effective.
Reading #2: Rocking the Vote
By Amanda Perl
*Common Ground*, May/June 2001

If the Florida recount disaster taught us anything, it's that an election is never as simple as pulling a lever. Start planning your next one right now.

Before last December, "Chad" to most people was just one half of a 1960s pop duo, or maybe the name of a friend or family member. But that particular word association has since taken a back seat to the chad we learned about during Florida's post-election circus. Long-overdue attention is now being focused on the Sunshine State's impressionistic voting procedures, with special consideration given to the deceptively simple question of how ballots are cast.

But this scrutiny shouldn't be limited to municipal elections. As community association officers, residents, and professionals, you should examine your own election processes to make sure there's no chance of a fight breaking out over pregnant or dimpled chads. Whether you're coordinating your first election or just brushing up on your procedures, you shouldn't have any problems—as long as you have a game plan.

**PREPARE TO PREPARE**

As with any project, it's important that you have enough planning time. Most elections take place during an association's annual meeting, so you do have an endpoint to shoot for.

**Plan.** If neither your association's governing documents nor state law dictates an election time frame, Judy Burd Rosen, AMS, PCAM, of the Smith Management Group, in St. Louis, Missouri, advises starting the election process at least three months before the election takes place. This should leave enough time to do everything you need to do—from forming a nominating committee to soliciting candidates to consulting with your professional advisers. It will also allow your residents to plan ahead so that they can attend the meeting—and vote in person.

**Review.** Advance preparation gives your board and manager time to evaluate your last election. You can identify both problems and successes and revise your procedures accordingly. This is also a good time to review the electoral process in relation to your association's governing documents and see if set procedures were followed. In fact, Cincinnati attorney James A. Matre, a *Common Ground* contributing editor, recommends that associations conduct a yearly review of election procedures. It's all too easy, he says, for oversights to go unrecognized and become entrenched in your association's election process. Catching them before someone else—possibly a dissenter—might prevent a future controversy.
Reading #3: Special Interests
Common Ground, May/June 2001
By Gil Cross, CMCA, PCAM

The national civics lesson that followed the 2000 presidential campaign has important implications for developing election rules all the way down to the association level. Most associations' governing documents don't address the specifics of holding elections, but they're the first place to begin developing a fair election policy. Questions to ponder:

**Proxy forms.** What proxy forms are acceptable? Only those printed by the association? Does the association use a directed proxy, on which a resident specifically indicates how the proxy-holder is to cast his or her ballot? What happens if the proxy-holder doesn't cast the ballot as directed?

**Proxy-holder.** Must a proxy-holder be an association resident, or can it be anyone of the homeowner's choosing? Does the proxy form allow proxies to be assigned to the board secretary?

**Ballots.** Do ballots have to be marked specifically as denoted in the instructions, or does the mere indication of voter intent constitute a validly cast ballot? What ballot is acceptable? Only those printed by the association? Are absentee ballots acceptable under the association's governing documents? In what order are candidates to be listed on the ballot? Alphabetical? Incumbents first?

**Prejudicial ballots.** Is sufficient care used in the formulation of ballots? If the only qualification for serving on the board of directors is being a member of the association, a ballot may be prejudicial if it indicates a particular candidate is a non-resident owner or isn't a member in good standing.

**Soliciting proxies.** Can a candidate or his or her representatives solicit proxies? Can a limit be imposed to regulate the number of proxies any member may hold?

**Good standing.** Are ballots issued to everyone, or only to those members in "good standing"—assuming that good standing means only that a member doesn't have any delinquent assessments? Can a member who isn't in good standing be nominated from the floor as a valid candidate for the board?

**Nominations.** Is there an established nominating committee to seek out qualified candidates? What qualifications does the committee use to compile a slate of candidates? Are nominations taken from the floor at the meeting?

**Recount.** Are deadlines and procedures established for a ballot recount? How long are ballots, proxies, and tally sheets held, where are they held, and by whom?
Timeline. Finally, establish a timeline for the election. Write down every task that goes into planning and implementing the election, and designate someone to complete each assignment—and the date by which it should be completed. This prevents items from being overlooked (or sneaking up on you) and adds a sense of accountability to the process. Have your manager and/or attorney review this list to make sure that you're not missing anything—and to let them know if you've assigned them anything to do.

WANTED: CANDIDATES

After you've set a schedule and assigned tasks, it's time to take the first step in the actual process: finding candidates. There are three ways to solicit candidates for board positions—a nominating committee, nominations from the floor, and write-ins on absentee ballots or directed proxies.

Each has its pros and cons, and most associations' governing documents dictate which method or combination of methods to use. If your bylaws aren't that specific, attorney P. Michael Nagle makes the following suggestion in his book *GAP Report 21: Guide to Annual Meetings, Special Meetings & Elections*: "If the statute and governing documents do not specify a nominating method, the board should select a process and implement appropriate procedures and safeguards. To ensure continuity and to avoid confusion among the electorate, amend the process into the documents so that the community can be certain of the process it will use in the future."

Nominating committee. If your governing documents don't provide for a nominating committee, they at least should include a provision allowing for the formation of special-project or ad-hoc committees on an as-needed basis. The nominating committee is just what you'd think: Its members are responsible for soliciting prospective candidates from the community and officially nominating them. To ensure a fair and impartial process, Rosen suggests that members of the nominating committee be neutral parties; that is, they shouldn't be related to or living with members of the board. "Some boards are seen as very political," Rosen says. "It's important to have a balance."

To find candidates, Rosen suggests that your committee send out a Request for Nominations flier. (Of course, check your association's bylaws and state provisions for a specific time frame and any information that must be included in the flier.) This, Rosen explains, "opens [the election process] to everyone in the community." Notifying everyone in a widespread manner, as opposed to sticking to posted meeting minutes, for example, will help involve residents and potential candidates—and prevent claims that no one knew about the election.

Nominating committees are helpful because they allow people to find out about all of the candidates before the election. The committees can arrange
candidate forums at which residents can discuss their concerns with
candidates and find out their views on pressing community issues. These
forums can take place directly after nominations are closed or at a separate
event prior to the meeting. Just remember to incorporate them into your
timeline, and know who will compile information sheets about candidates and
copy and distribute them to owners.

**Nominations from the floor.** This may seem like the most efficient way to
identify candidates, because it requires no preplanning. Nominations are
simply called out at the meeting at which the election will be held. However,
this may preclude some residents from becoming candidates simply because
they weren't able to attend. Additionally, some nominations may be
impulsive, made by people who are unaware of the responsibilities or time
constraints that are part of being a board member.

**Write-in candidates.** Although this method allows owners who aren't
present to vote for the candidates of their choice—whether they're on the
ballot or not—it brings up many questions: Is a second necessary? Does (and
how does) the write-in candidate agree to serve? Nagle writes: "Normally,
the only viable write-in candidacy is one that is done as the organized and
concerted effort of a group of owners." Nevertheless, to ensure a fair
process, write-in votes should be allowed unless provisions in the governing
documents say otherwise.

**CAST AWAY**

Don't let dimpled and hanging chads intimidate you. The actual business of
casting ballots needn't be controversial—as long as you follow your governing
documents and state law.

**Proxies.** A proxy is a document that allows someone else to vote on your
behalf. Determine whether your governing documents call for the use of
directed or general proxies, then establish how residents can hand in their
proxies and by what means and standards they'll be verified for authenticity.
Also, submit a copy of the proxy to your association's attorney before you
send it out. According to Matre, it's easier to deal with potential problems
first, rather than cleaning up something you shouldn't have done in the first
place.

**Neutrality.** Appoint neutral volunteers to oversee ballot counting. For
example, Rosen suggests selecting three homeowners from the "audience" at
the meeting to help your manager tally votes. Or you could enlist a third
party—such as the League of Women Voters—to administer the election.

**Ballots.** Create official absentee and standard ballots, making them easy to
read and understand. Determine if you're going to list candidates in
alphabetical order or generate a list by random selection. Decide if you're
going to indicate that a candidate is an incumbent. See if your governing
documents call for a candidate to obtain either a majority or a plurality of votes, and whether they permit cumulative voting—casting all of your ballots for one candidate when you're voting for more than one position.

**Electronic voting.** For a fee, companies such as iBallot.com will help a community hold its election online. Residents log onto a designated Web site, type in their user name and password (as assigned by the association), and vote for the candidate of their choice. Results are automatically tabulated, and the election administrator (as assigned by the board) accesses the results. Although state laws vary with regard to this service, it's a way for you to increase voter turnout by allowing owners to vote from home or work. Additionally, with iBallot.com, owners can receive an e-mail message reminding them to vote with a link to the site.

More often than not, association elections occur smoothly, without anyone giving them a second thought. However, factions can develop and mudslinging isn't unheard of, which is why your association should always conduct elections by the book. It will avoid controversy and free your newly elected board members from even the appearance of taint. Before you begin your next election process, grab your bylaws, take some notes, and make sure that everything will run efficiently and effectively—without hanging chads.
Reading #4: Heads Up Meeting
By Jim Slaughter, ESQ.
Common Ground, September/October 2000

A bad meeting is like the mythical Hydra. Cut off one head, and two more sprout up. But you can tame this unfocused monstrosity with parliamentary procedure.

Business as usual: a board meeting; a treasurer’s report. Following the treasurer’s report, a board member moves to "accept" the report. A lengthy discussion follows. There’s a motion to "table the matter to the next meeting." An argument starts on whether the motion should be to "table" or to "postpone." By the end of the meeting, the board has spent more time debating procedure than discussing substantive issues. If only the presiding officer had realized the treasurer's report required no motion or vote whatsoever.

Nobody likes a meeting, and this scenario illustrates why. There always seems to be too much to do and not enough time to do it. Looming above it all is the ever-present threat of tangents and diversions—the treasurer's report that turns into a procedural debate, or the resident's question that becomes a filibuster. Indeed, a poorly run meeting can be like the legendary Hydra, a monster that in Greek mythology grew two heads for every one that was cut off.

You don't have the option of slicing off heads and searing the wounds with fire, as Hercules did to finally defeat the Hydra. But you have the next best thing: parliamentary procedure, which can help turn long, confrontational meetings into short, painless ones. Before you groan at the thought of member after member standing to intone, "Point of order," at your next meeting, consider: Courts have held that all organizations—including community associations—are subject to the principles and rules of common parliamentary law. Members who act contrary to the rules they have adopted can be held liable for their actions. As a result, ignoring or incorrectly applying parliamentary procedure can lead to embarrassment and even lawsuits.

But the benefits of a well-run meeting extend beyond questions of liability. Presiding officers who make every effort to learn the essentials of parliamentary procedure might find their next meeting a bit less Herculean.

WHAT IS PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE?
Parliamentary procedure is all the rules that govern the transaction of business in meetings. Contrary to popular opinion, it's not limited to Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised. True, Robert's is the most used authority, but Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure is actually an easier book from which to learn parliamentary procedure.
WHAT PROCEDURES SHOULD YOU FOLLOW?
You can formally adopt written rules of procedure by adopting a bylaws provision that a book such as Robert's shall be the parliamentary authority. This authority then governs procedure except as spelled out in higher authorities—such as federal or state law, governing documents, or specially adopted rules of order. The parliamentary authority can also be supplemented with specific rules.

How you conduct your business is often determined by the size of your assembly. Smaller boards and committees can and sometimes should be more informal. In fact, Robert's Rules notes that formality can actually hinder business in a meeting of fewer than a dozen. As a result, in smaller boards, members aren't required to obtain the floor and can make motions or speak while seated; motions need not be seconded; there is no limit to the number of times a member can speak to a question; motions to close or limit debate generally aren't used; and the chair usually can make motions and vote on all questions.

Small boards can always follow more formal procedure on matters of sufficient importance or controversy.

In contrast, an annual meeting must be more formal due to the number of members present. Debate has to be limited to keep the meeting on time, and formal votes help avoid legal challenges to any actions that are taken.

HOW DO YOU BRING BUSINESS BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY?
In meetings that follow formal procedure, no discussion should occur without being preceded by a "motion," a formal proposal for consideration and action. In a formal meeting, every item of business—whether a proposal to spend $500,000 on building renovations or to take a five-minute break—needs one.

There are three steps for bringing a motion before an assembly:

1. **A member makes the motion.** For most motions, a member—which means a board member at a board meeting and an association member at an annual meeting—must seek recognition from the presiding officer. Once recognized, the member stands and says, "I move that...."

2. **Another member seconds the motion.** The seconder doesn't need to be recognized and can simply yell out, "Second!" The idea is that an assembly shouldn't spend its time discussing a matter unless at least two members want to.

3. **The chair states the question.** The presiding officer repeats the motion by stating, "It is moved and seconded that...," allowing the chair to verify the wording. Before being stated by the chair, a motion belongs to its maker and can be withdrawn at any time. After being stated by the chair, a motion belongs to the assembly and must be processed with debate and a vote.
Once it's before the assembly, a motion is considered in three steps:

1. **Members debate the motion (unless undebatable).** Several rules govern who gets to speak:
   - The maker of the motion gets to speak first.
   - Anyone who hasn't spoken is recognized before anyone who has already spoken.
   - If possible, debate alternates pro and con.
   - Members can only speak twice on a particular motion.

2. **The chair puts the question to a vote.** When debate ends (either because no one seeks the floor or because a motion to close debate has been adopted), the chair repeats the motion by saying, "The question is on the adoption of..." The vote can be taken by voice ("aye's" and "no's"), standing, hand, or some other means.

3. **The chair announces the outcome.** The last step is for the chair to announce whether the motion passed or failed.

The process for considering a motion can seem repetitive. However, there is no worse situation in a meeting than when members don't understand what is being discussed or voted on. A core goal of proper procedure is to assure that all members know the parliamentary situation at any given moment.

**WHAT MOTIONS ARE MOST USED?**

As you can see, the key to parliamentary procedure is the motion. While there are a lot of them—*Robert's Rules* lists more than 80 in its central table—most meetings stick to about a dozen:

- **Main motion:** brings business before the assembly; permitted only when no other motion is pending.
- **Amendment:** allows modifications to another motion by adding, deleting, or changing words.
- **Refer:** allows a matter to be sent to a smaller group to consider and report back.
- **Postpone:** delays consideration of a matter.
- **Limit debate:** places a limit on the time or number of speakers.
- **Previous question:** ends debate immediately.
- **Table:** temporarily delays a matter when something of urgency arises.
- **Recess:** permits a short break.
- **Adjourn:** ends the meeting.
**Point of order:** calls attention to an error in procedure.

**Point of information:** allows a member to ask a question.

**Division of the assembly:** demands a rising (but not counted) vote after a voice vote.

Each motion has detailed rules on when it can be introduced, whether it needs a second, whether it is debatable, and what vote is required for adoption.

**HOW DO MOTIONS WORK TOGETHER?**

Not all motions are in order at any given moment. Instead, certain motions are considered ahead of others in formal procedure. This concept is known as "precedence." The order of precedence, from highest- to lowest-ranking motion, is as follows: adjourn, recess, lay on the table, previous question, limit/extend debate, postpone to a certain time, refer, amend, and main motion.

Precedence is governed by two rules:

1. When a motion is being considered, any motion higher on the list—but no motion of lower precedence—may be proposed.
2. The motion last proposed (and highest on the list) is considered and decided first.

For example, suppose the main motion being discussed is to authorize $5,000 for painting. A motion is made to amend the main motion by striking "$5,000" and inserting "$7,500" (which is in order, as it's higher on the list than the main motion). The amendment is discussed, and a motion is made to refer the matter to a committee (which is also in order). Discussion begins on a motion to refer. Then a motion is made to postpone the matter until next month's meeting (again, in order). A member then moves to adjourn the entire meeting (also in order). Prior to voting on the motion to adjourn, a member obtains the floor and moves to

**BUSINESS TO BUSINESS**

Procedure doesn’t just apply to specific pieces of business. It’s also felt in a systematic plan for the orderly conduct of an entire meeting:

**OPENING THE MEETING.** The presiding officer should never call a meeting to order until a quorum is present. A quorum is the number of members entitled to vote who must be present in order for business to be legally transacted. Quorum is typically defined in the governing documents of the community association. Once a quorum is present, the presiding officer calls the meeting to order by stating, "The meeting will come to order."
APPROVAL OF MINUTES. Minutes typically are distributed to all members so that they don't have to be read aloud. Corrections and approval are normally done by unanimous consent. That is, the presiding officer can ask, "Is there any objection to approving the minutes as read [or distributed]?" If there is no objection, the minutes are approved.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES. The first substantive item of business in many meetings is hearing from the officers and established committees. In most cases, the presiding officer learns in advance who needs to report and calls only on those officers and committees.

Reports are generally for information only. In such instances, no motion is necessary following the reports unless there are recommendations to be implemented. A motion "to adopt" or "to accept" a report is seldom wise except when the report is to be issued or published in the name of the organization.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES. Unlike standing committees, special committees don't have continual existence. Instead, they exist solely for the purpose of a specific project or special event.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS. Unfinished business refers to matters carried over from a previous meeting. For organizations that meet at least four times a year, this may include any item that was pending when the previous meeting adjourned or was postponed to the present meeting. If there is no unfinished business, the presiding officer should skip this category.

NEW BUSINESS. The presiding officer may be unaware of what items will arise here, and thus introduces the heading by asking, "Is there any new business?" Any member can introduce any new item of business by making a motion and obtaining a second. Following the consideration of each item, the chair asks, "Is there any further new business?" This process continues until there are no additional business items.

CLOSING THE MEETING. In most assemblies, the presiding officer can adjourn the meeting without waiting for a motion to do so. If every item of business has been considered, the presiding officer can ask, "Is there any further business?" If there is no response, the presiding officer simply states: "Since there is no further business, the meeting is adjourned."
Reading #5: Fair Elections
By Kenneth Budd
Common Ground

There was a time when political machines dominated American politics. The infamous Daley machine ran Chicago. The Curley machine ran Boston. The Pendergast machine ran Missouri. The machines chose the candidates and garnered the votes, even if the voters weren't always alive.

While smoky backrooms and political bosses are relegated to the history books, many homeowners in community associations believe rigged elections are alive and well. They claim that candidates arrive with boxes of ballots. That no independent authority oversees the election except for far-from-independent association officers. That board members forge proxies to ensure their election. That candidates are chosen by the board, in secret, with the voters never learning who they are until election night. That freedom of choice is as great a farce as the election itself.

Elections are the soul of any democracy. A community association that fails to run its elections with the highest integrity will face a disgruntled membership and angry lawsuits. And more than likely they'll face a second election. A recall election.

I Accept the Nomination

Fair elections start with a fair nominating process. Directors should not hand-pick their successors or spread rumors about their least favorite candidates. There should be no signs of favoritism. Running for the board should not be so difficult that residents are discouraged from even trying.

One of the best ways to nominate candidates is through a nominating committee. A nominating committee can perform a variety of tasks, from finding candidates to gathering biographical and platform information. Some governing documents require the nominating committee to be a standing committee.

"I try to encourage the creation of a nominating committee in every association I manage," said Minneapolis manager and Common Ground contributing editor Gil Cross. "I encourage them to actively seek out the type of individuals who would make responsible board members." Cross' committees distribute nomination forms asking candidates to provide a biographical sketch and explain why they want to serve on the board.

Even if the association has a nominating committee, candidates can still be nominated from the floor. Columbia, Maryland attorney P. Michael Nagle, writing in CAI's GAP Report #21, notes that few documents require the association to obtain candidates only through the nominating committee. As
a result, most associations do not close the nominating process until a motion is passed at the meeting. And if the association allows nominations from the floor, writes Nagle, it is compelled to allow write-in votes (though there is no guarantee that the nominee is willing to serve).

A nominating committee is still the best solution for both the candidates and the members. CAI Trustee Maryjane Moore, CMCA, PCAM, of Levin & Moore Community Association Services in Nashua, New Hampshire, says her company—which provides election services—advocates the following two-step nomination process:

(1) About two months prior to the election, nominations open and the association circulates petitions for candidacy to the owners. Candidates use these forms to nominate themselves. The petitions generally must be signed by 7-10 owners. The candidates provide a brief autobiographical sketch—about 200 words or less—outlining who they are and why they should be elected.

"This ensures that the folks who are running really want to serve, rather than being coerced on the spot at the annual meeting," said Moore. "It also allows for absentee ballots."

(2) About one month before the election, nominations are closed. The board formally accepts all of the submitted petitions. The association prepares an annual meeting notice package that includes a proxy for establishing a quorum and voting on issues that may come before the membership. It also includes an absentee ballot with all the candidates listed. That way, those who can't attend can vote for the candidates of their choice rather than leaving the decision to the proxy holder. The package also includes—as does the newsletter—autobiographical sketches of the candidates.

Biographical sketches are important. The more information owners receive on elections and candidates the better. The association needs to clearly publicize nomination procedures. It needs to welcome candidates and invite them to serve. It should publish open calls for candidates in the newsletter as early as possible (some experts suggest this should occur six months before the election). Take advantage of every available communication tool, from bulletin boards to special mailings.

"Nothing upsets people more than thinking that decisions are being made secretly, and that they are being cut out of the process," wrote Gaithersburg, Maryland attorney Eileen Basaman in the CAI Washington Metro Chapter newsletter Quorum. "[Information] provided to the community before the election can allay a lot of anxieties and controversies about favoritism." To further reduce fears of favoritism, the nominating committee—not the board—should prepare any information on the candidates and their positions. Owners should receive this information well before the election. Many communities also hold a "Meet the Candidates" night. This allows owners to
hear the candidates’ opinions on community issues. To ensure fairness, each candidate should have equal time to speak. And the moderator should be an independent party—not someone who is openly rooting for a particular candidate.

The placement of names on ballots and information sheets also can lead to charges of favoritism. Basaman suggests that ballot positions be determined by a lottery or simply by listing the candidates alphabetically (which is required by law in some states).

**Official Proxies**

Proxies are both a blessing and a curse. Without proxies, many associations wouldn’t have a quorum for the annual meeting. But proxies, if the association isn’t careful, can be falsified by unscrupulous candidates.

One of the best ways to increase proxy returns is to print the proxy on a postage-paid, pre-addressed business reply card. This way, the owner can fill out the proxy and put it right into the mail. To prevent falsification, this should be an "official proxy"—and the association should accept nothing else.

"We have used several different methods including colored paper, labels, or other identifying marks to ensure that they are official," said Moore. "In some cases, the documents may require a notarized proxy."

Some experts believe notarized proxies are the best way to avoid forgeries. Another method is to maintain signature cards. That way, suspicious signatures can be verified. Plus, the mere existence of signature cards can discourage potential forgers. According to Nagle, many associations can use the pool pass or Welcome Wagon process to obtain the signatures.
"It may be enough merely to establish a rule that no proxy will be validated unless the owner has a signature card on file," writes Nagle.

Other experts believe the effectiveness of signature cards are outweighed by the difficulties in maintaining them.

"I have found that signature cards are difficult to keep current," said Robert Nesbit, an attorney with Kovitz, Shifrin and Waitzman in Buffalo Grove, Illinois. "They do not always reflect that there are multiple owners of a unit, some of whom are not reflected on the card."

**Stuffing the Ballot Box**

Many attorneys prefer that associations use directed proxies rather than general proxies. General proxies allow the proxy holder to vote at the meeting. Directed proxies are more like absentee ballots. According to Nagle, the proxy holder is little more than a courier who is entrusted with recording a vote.

"In virtually all cases, I encourage the association to use a directed proxy in which the owner directs how the proxy holder should vote," said Cross.

To further prevent abuse, some associations limit the number of proxies that any one member can hold. This prevents a candidate from coming to the annual meeting with a bag full of proxies—and winning the election before it's even held. At the same time, owners can still give their proxies to a neighbor if they can't attend the meeting.

A large number of proxies doesn't necessarily indicate fraud, however. It could just show that one candidate campaigned more aggressively than the others.

"Every member has an equal right to collect and solicit proxies," said Princeton, New Jersey attorney Ronald L. Perl of Hill Wallack, Attorneys at Law. "Absent fraud, there is really no reason to prevent the director from aggressively seeking them."

**Democracy in Action**

In general, the board of directors should not be directly involved in running the election or counting the ballots. Think about it: if you were voting for president and you saw Bill Clinton counting the ballots, wouldn't you be a little suspicious?

"In most cases the elections can be run quite fairly and well by the management firm or an election committee," said Moore. "However, there are occasions where it makes more sense for an outside party to run the election. Some consulting firms specialize in this service (as we do)."
Sometimes it makes sense for the association's legal counsel to provide this service. Or, some management companies offer this service for self-managed communities."

Associations also can hire outside groups such as the League of Women voters to run elections. Basaman even suggests that group such as the League run the "Meet the Candidates" night. Other attorneys, however, believe such measures are necessary only if the community has a history of election problems.

"Generally, management and the association attorney can ensure that the election is properly run," said Perl. "In associations with a history of contested or problem elections, it might be worth retaining an independent third party to do everything from sending notices and collecting proxies to tabulating and announcing the results."

Tabulating the votes should be an open process. If the votes are counted by the president behind locked doors, residents will naturally become cynical and suspicious—and then the association will have to contend with demands for a recount. That's why the votes should always be counted in the open and, again, by an independent party—typically owners selected from the audience.

"I believe that the counting of ballots should be done by volunteers at the meeting," said Perl. "In other cases, the managing agent and attorney have been appointed where the documents so authorize." Perl also suggests that each candidate be allowed to appoint an observer who can challenge a count as it occurs.

"If there is a small margin of victory, there is more likely to be a request for a recount," said Perl. "However, with each candidate having an observer, it is harder to justify a recount."

One way to further ensure the fairness and accuracy of the ballot counting is by appointing volunteer election judges. Some bylaws specifically require this.

"If disinterested parties cannot be located, I try to pair up judges from opposite camps," said Nesbit. "This way, they can keep an eye on each other." To double check the ballots, Nesbit adds that each set of judges should count the votes and compare their results with the other judges.

**Read the Documents**

Like nearly every community association issue, the steps for running elections are spelled out in state statutes and the association’s governing documents. The documents may state when the association needs to send out election notices. They also may state whether owners who are delinquent
in their assessments are permitted to vote. If the procedures are not clear, said Perl, the board should consider amending the documents or writing rules to clarify them.

Many documents require that an election committee be appointed at the current annual meeting to run the next election. Even if this requirement isn't in the documents, Perl recommends that associations adopt it as a rule.

"The election should be out of the board's hands to avoid political maneuvering," said Perl. "There should be some independence to the election process."

There also should be involvement by residents in the election process. As the association struggles to obtain proxies, it should emphasize the importance of voting. After all, the future of the community is at stake—as is the homeowner's investment.

"In several associations I manage, the quorum requirement for an annual meeting is only 10 percent," said Cross. "That means it only takes 10 percent to make things happen. Everyone has to be aware of the importance of participating. The world is run by those who show up."
Reading #6: Conducting Meetings
By Kenneth Budd
Common Ground

It’s the monthly board meeting, and you’re meeting in the kitchen of the president’s home. The first item on the agenda? Chaos. As the secretary reviews the minutes, Little Jimmy, the president's three-year-old son, bangs a drum and parades around the table. Older son Joey fights with his sister over the television, which is only slightly louder than an Apollo moon launch. Freida, the treasurer, continually leaves the table to grab doughnuts, while Fred, a homeowner whose voice is actually louder than the TV, lobbies for approval of his Brady Bunch garden gnomes. With each interruption, the discussion strays to new and unrelated topics—when Freida explains the relationship between pet problems and UFO abductions, the president searches for the agenda, which, unfortunately, was eaten by the dog. Finally, after four hours and 16 minutes, the meeting adjourns, due to a lack of additional doughnuts.

This is not the way to hold a board meeting. A board meeting is not a social meeting. It's not a time to gossip, to socialize, or to promote a personal agenda. It’s a business meeting. And if your board meetings are lasting longer than two hours—with nothing accomplished—then something is wrong. Maybe it’s the environment. Maybe it's disorganization. Maybe it's a lack of leadership.

Unproductive meetings create unproductive boards. They increase frustration, destroy morale, and make it harder to recruit volunteers. They also waste everyone's time. Here's how you can eliminate distractions and hold an effective, efficient board meeting.

KNOW YOUR AGENDA

Meetings at Shelter Creek, a 1,296-unit community in San Bruno, California, used to last three to four hours. Now they last no more than two hours. Mike Yarman, Shelter Creek's manager, attributes the improvement to advance planning. He meets with the president the night before the meeting to discuss the agenda. If the agenda is particularly full, he holds a 45-minute study session two weeks before the meeting.

The study session is an open forum for directors and members. For example, if the association was scheduled to decide on an insurance contract at its next meeting, insurance representatives would be invited to the study sessions to answer questions.

"Board members get more out of it than if they just received a meeting packet," said Yarman. "They come to the meeting prepared."
As Shelter Creek shows, preparation and planning are critical for successful meetings. Board members should receive and review the agenda and other relevant materials at least one week before the meeting. It's like coaching a football team—would you give the players the game plan the week before the game, or five minutes before kickoff? Preparation reduces problems. A board meeting is not a time for surprises.

Efficient meetings borrow another tool from football: the game clock. Including time limits on the agenda keeps speakers from rambling. Joseph G. Carleton, Jr., a Maine attorney and legislator who is writing a book on meetings, says an agenda with start times and time limits gives the meeting structure.

"They make directors more aware of time," said Carleton. "They provide a subtle reminder if you're falling behind in the discussion." Carleton also suggests that the president remind directors of time limits before the meeting begins.

**STAYING ON COURSE**

Writing an agenda does not guarantee an effective meeting. Boards of directors often stray from the agenda, which adds countless minutes to the meeting—a discussion on pool contracts leads to a discussion on pool halls, which results in a 15-minute debate on *The Music Man*. Keeping the discussion focused on association business is the responsibility of the meeting chair—typically, the president.

"The president determines the flow of business," said Carleton. "He or she keeps the others in check and suggests when it's time to stop talking and start voting." The president, said Carleton, is the mediator—the guiding force who prevents 30-minute monologues and gossip sessions, and searches for consensus in the group. When the discussion deteriorates or heads in another direction, the president needs to steer it back. The manager can assist in keeping the meeting on target.

As part of the steering process, Arizona community manager Brent Herrington, PCAM, has another suggestion: never present an issue—particularly a minor one—without a proposed solution.

"Any time you dangle a topic in front of a group of people and invite them to opine about it, everyone will feel challenged to weigh-in with some insightful observations and off-the-cuff opinions," said Herrington, in a message posted on CAI's Community Associations Online (CAO) computer network. Instead, Herrington recommends that the manager, the president, or a committee research the issues before the meeting, and propose a solution. For example, if a resident inquires about extending the pool hours, the president or manager can say: "For the next item on the agenda, I recommend we revise our pool rules so the facility can remain open until 10:00 p.m. during the
months of June, July, and August. This is in response to a member request. I have weighed the pros and cons and believe it will be a positive change for the community. Assuming the board is supportive, I would like to announce this change in the May newsletter, with the condition that the change is on a trial basis and will be reevaluated in July. Is there a motion to approve my recommendation?"

DON’T BE AFRAID OF PROEDURE

Parliamentary procedure is vital for a smooth-running meeting. But Robert’s Rules of Order—the bible of parliamentary procedure—can be difficult to understand. Fortunately, there are some basic rules of parliamentary procedure that can be easily followed by all associations. These include:

- Follow the agenda
- Discuss only one subject at a time
- Give each board member a chance to speak
- Speak only on the issue being discussed
- Speak only when recognized by the chair
- Address questions and comments to the chair
- Decide issues through motions, seconds, and votes

GET OUT OF THE HOUSE

When board members began bringing food scraps to meetings, Judy Burd, AMS, knew there was a problem. Actually, there were two problems: two fluffy little dogs named Yip and Yap, as Burd, of Legum & Norman management in McLean, Virginia, liked to call them.

Yip and Yap belonged to a board member who brought them to every meeting. The dogs would scamper about the room, yipping and yapping. Directors brought the food scraps to keep the dogs quiet. At the end of the director’s term, she moved to a neighboring building. Her reputation preceded her. When Yip and Yap moved in, the board of directors passed a rule stating that "no pets are permitted to attend meetings of the association."
Eliminating distractions is essential for running a meeting. Would IBM hold an important board meeting with dogs scurrying around the room? Hopefully not.

IBM also wouldn't hold a meeting in the CEO's kitchen. Meetings should be held in an environment that enhances productivity. A meeting in a board member's home will typically invite more distractions, from pets to the television. Consider more formal settings—if the association has a clubhouse, find an available room. If the manager has an office, hold the meeting there. Many public libraries have meeting rooms available for minimal fees.

"It helps maintain a business-like atmosphere," said Carleton.

Some meeting experts believe a business-like setting does not include food. Food can be disruptive—imagine directors munching corn chips during the management report. According to Carleton, refreshments are fine for the beginning of the meeting, or at a break in the middle, but not during the meeting. Some associations, however, keep cookies, sodas, and coffee at their meetings—they feel it creates a nicer atmosphere.

One thing that does not create a nicer atmosphere, said Burd, are cigarettes. She believes cigarettes are distracting—her board meetings are strictly nonsmoking. Board meetings are business meetings, not poker games. Alcohol is even worse than cigarettes. It affects decision making, and an emptying wine bottle usually corresponds with diminished productivity.

"I don't like the connotations of having alcohol at a meeting," said Burd. "If there is a controversial decision, or if a director seems out of control, residents could later say the director was drunk."

WHEN TO HOLD THEM

When is the best time of day to hold meetings? It depends on the personalities and time constraints of the board members. What works for one board may not work for another.

There are pros and cons for various times. David Gibbons, PCAM, a management consultant and former CAI president, is a proponent of day meetings. Gibbons believes directors need to be at their top mental and physical condition when meeting. That is difficult after working an eight-hour day, fighting through rush hour traffic, and wolfing down a quick meal and a cocktail (or after no meal at all). Gibbons thinks directors should meet early, at 7:00 or 7:30 a.m., before heading to work. This inspires them to hold quicker, more efficient meetings. Another alternative is to hold the meeting at 4:00 or 4:30 in the afternoon, rather than late in the evening.

Others argue that day meetings are unrealistic and more likely to exclude homeowners who work. So what's the best evening time? Yarman has found
that the last Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. works best for both board members and homeowners at Shelter Creek. Rather than stressing out directors, Yarman thinks the 7:00 p.m. starts give them time to get home from work, unwind, and have dinner before attending the meeting. Others suggest 7:30 p.m.

While there is no consensus on when to hold a meeting, most experts agree that meetings should not last more than two hours.

"Most people become unproductive after an hour-and-a half," said Carleton. "At that point, it may be more productive to continue at another time." As Gibbons noted, when tired, frustrated people make rash, last-second decisions, the result can be an even longer meeting filled with hundreds of angry owners.

**THE FORUM IS OPEN**

You're meeting in a library meeting room. There are no cigarettes, no dogs, and the president is dutifully following the agenda. Everyone is prepared and attentive. What could possibly cause the meeting to lose its momentum?

A disgruntled homeowner.

A homeowner with a grudge can throw a meeting into chaos. To allow owners to speak their minds without disrupting the meeting, most associations hold an open forum, usually before the meeting. That way, residents can voice their opinions—and are less likely to stay and cause distractions.

Whenever the open forum is held, try limiting it to 30 minutes. To keep it under control, inform owners in attendance of the rules—for example, owners are generally given about three to five minutes to speak. Some associations use timers while the homeowners talk. Others use sign-up sheets. Rose Hopp, manager of the Heron’s Cove Condominium in Gaithersburg, Maryland, makes the management report available to members four days before the meeting. Members are aware of what will be discussed, and come to the open forum prepared.

But sometimes members don't just speak at the open forum—they also speak during the meeting. Carleton feels the president must firmly and politely state that while owner input is welcome, board meetings are for board members.

"It requires a degree of tact," said Carleton. "You don't want to be accused of shutting members out, but you have to get on with business."

Burd recommends another tool for restoring order: the gavel.

"I've seen presidents pound a shoe on the table," said Burd. "I believe in
having a gavel and using it if necessary."

Gavel or no gavel, efficient, two-hour meetings will lead to more effective community associations. While the structure of a meeting is also determined by the association documents and state statutes, associations have the power to run productive meetings. Let the agenda guide your meetings—not your doughnut supply.
Reading #7: 50 Ways to Get the Most Out of Committees

By Cecilia Gutierrez

Common Ground

Behind every good community association are successful committees. Committees provide an important voice to the association’s members and offer them the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process.

With ongoing support and follow-through, a properly structured committee process can be beneficial to the board, managers, and members of the community at large. Here are 50 suggestions that will guarantee committee success.

How the Board and Manager Can Help

1. Utilize committees as an intricate, desired, and respected part of the decision-making process.
2. Give members a job description—a written statement of duties. Put it in writing so that no one can misinterpret their job or stray from the assignment.
3. State objectives in clear, concise, measurable terms and assure that they are realistic and worthwhile.
4. Modify or restate objectives if new information indicates they are too narrow or broad.
5. Ensure that the committee understands its scope of authority. Make it clear that the committee makes recommendations to the board, and the board develops policy.
6. Make certain that the committee knows the association's policies, practices, and procedures, and everyone's relationship to each other in the working process.
7. Provide the committee with the necessary resources. Assure that they have all pertinent background information (records, reports, and documents). Provide them with any needed equipment or supplies. Assure they have adequate facilities, access to professionals, and sufficient time to complete their task.
8. Communicate regularly. Check in with the committee for updates on its progress.
9. Make sure that committees are aware of the process for communicating with the board.
10. Provide direction so that the committee maintains focus.
11. Provide committees with a board liaison.
12. Act upon the committee’s recommendations.
13. Offer support and assistance. Refer them to professionals, type committee minutes and agendas, and distribute committee reports.
14. Include committee reports on board meeting agendas.
The Working Process

15. Teach members to work toward consensus. Although this may seem difficult, doing so promotes a fuller examination of the facts, generates more ideas, and results in more careful decision making. Members should work toward consensus but compromise when necessary.

16. Clearly specify the committee's goals (general) and objectives (specific). Identify what will be accomplished or what needs improvement and when.

17. Develop a written plan with specific steps to reach objectives. Identify what needs to be done, how to do it, and who is going to do it.

18. Ensure that objectives are measurable and identifiable. That way, the committee can tell if it has reached its objectives and can prove its achievements to others.

19. Break down the plan into manageable sections to maintain interest and momentum.

20. Run professional meetings.

21. Adopt procedures for conducting business. Set an agenda, agenda topics, priorities, and time limits. And stick to the agenda—do not let meetings turn into social events.

22. Post meeting notices, start meetings on time, and end them on time. Keep minutes, and make written reports to the board.

23. Keep meetings issue oriented to prevent members from pursuing personal goals.

24. Arrange seating to facilitate face-to-face interaction. Seat members in an oval or circle.

25. Implement a positive communication process to encourage team bonding. Members' introductions should cover their family and career, their goals and ambitions, and even what they want to be remembered for. This helps the group to bond and to feel more confident about who they are and what they can contribute.

26. During the research process, committees should involve anyone with a vital interest in the problem and those who would be impacted by the solution.

27. Encourage empathetic listening. Listen to each committee member with respect and without judgment. Acknowledge ideas or suggestions.

28. Involve a cross-section of the community. Consider allowing renters to join committees.

29. Schedule "go arounds" where members must say what they think. Each member must be given the opportunity to express his or her opinion.

30. Encourage trust, respect, integrity, and community. Each committee member must believe that others are coming to the table in good faith.

31. Demand that members confront each other without being offensive. They should be critical of ideas but never personalities. They should discuss issues, not individuals, and show equal respect for all members and ideas.
32. Insist on internal cooperation. Do not allow members to act like competing individuals.
33. Use tension relieving aids. Be tolerant, use humor, and schedule breaks.
34. Avoid defeatist or negative thinking. The committee must look for an objective appraisal of the situation—not for reasons why the objective can't be achieved.
35. Encourage committees to brainstorm. Members should express all ideas first and delay judgment. Discard, combine, or edit ideas. Turn good ideas into action statements to develop a final plan for reaching objectives.
36. Assign co-chairs to share responsibilities.
37. Monitor progress—the committee should evaluate itself regularly to ensure it is on course. Always end meetings with an evaluation of the meeting itself. Discuss the way the meeting was run and needed improvements, if any.

**Motivating Committees**

38. Push the limits of your own imagination to challenge and motivate others.
39. Reinforce growing and development. Members will crave more. Reinforced confidence will propel them to generate their own ideas.
40. Make members aware that they are valued and welcomed.
41. Promote involvement as a fulfilling and rewarding experience.
42. Use internal rewards: the spirit of working together; the opportunity to create and innovate, and to learn and grow; having your opinion heard and respected; and pride in workmanship.
43. Offer praise and acceptance. They need to know they're appreciated.
44. Ensure that all members receive credit and are recognized in the community at large.
45. Reward the committee's hard work and success. Send thank you notes, mention them in the association newsletter, or give them a plaque or certificate.
46. Encourage committee members to praise each other's accomplishments and progress.
47. Involve members beginning with the orientation process. New members bring higher energy and fresh ideas and insights.
48. Schedule a social event.
49. Find opportunities to talk positively about the committee to the rest of the community.
50. Challenge committees to find another way.” Inspire people with a vision for the future. Promote imagination, creativity, and innovations.

Although board members and managers sometimes think of committees as an annoyance, they are critical to the success of an association. They can be a source of new ideas and an outlet for members to contribute to the association’s decision-making process.
Committees also are an excellent way to bring members into leadership roles. When you're working with a committee, remember: today's committee member could be tomorrow's board member.
Reading #8: Four Keys to Committee Success
By Carol Murphy

Common Ground

Somewhere along the line committees got a bad name. They are often thought of as being time-consuming and unproductive. It’s not that they deserve to be viewed in such a negative light, but that others expect the wrong things from them.

WHAT IS A COMMITTEE?

The purpose of a committee is to gather information and make recommendations to the board of directors concerning specific issues or areas of interest. Many times the board will expect the committee to come up with a solution to a problem. While this may occasionally happen, it isn’t always possible. It is not the responsibility of the committee to do so; the board has the final authority to resolve issues. In the process of investigating a matter, however, committees will frequently shed some new light on the subject at hand or uncover a previously undetected angle to the situation. At the very least, committees can provide the board with the opinions of the association members. In this way committees are useful vehicles to broaden communication between the board and association members.

KEYS TO EFFECTIVENESS

What can make a committee function effectively and run smoothly? The following four points are essential considerations for forming active and involved committees.

Key 1. PURPOSE.

The board of directors must clearly define what the committee’s primary objective is. The goal of an architectural review committee, for example, is to preserve the aesthetic qualities of the community. It is up to the board to make the committee members aware of the scope of their responsibilities. The committee should also understand that, according to the bylaws of the association, they make recommendations, they do not set policy. It is the board’s responsibility to change policy, if necessary, in order to solve problems, using the information and suggestions the committee provides. If the board does not support or take the committee suggestions into consideration, the members will lose interest and ultimately become less involved.

Key 2. PROCEDURE

All committees need to adopt a set of procedures and methods for
conducting their business. Such procedures often include using *Roberts Rules of Order*, setting regular monthly meetings, keeping minutes, and making written reports to the board of directors. No meeting can function properly without structure. The board should establish procedures and designate someone to monitor and help guide each committee. The "monitor" should be thought of as a resource, not as a substitute chairman. If in the early stages committees need more guidance, the person entrusted with this duty should attend the first meeting to help the committee understand their purpose and to help them create their structure and set their goals. The monitor should contact the committee chairperson about once a week to find out how the committee is coming along with its activities and to offer support or assistance. Once the committee is fully functional, the monitor can cut back on these check-ups. If the board member or manager becomes too involved in the workings of a committee, he runs the risk of becoming a committee of one. He should, however, continue to maintain some contact in order to keep an eye out for possible problems. The chairman should be a strong leader who can keep control over the proceedings of a meeting. Weak leaders who do not—or will not—set and follow procedures can be very destructive. There is nothing less productive and more frustrating than attending a meeting where there is no order.

**Key 3. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND DEADLINES**

The board of directors must set forth the specific objectives that the committee members are trying to achieve and the deadline for doing so. One of the objectives of an architectural review committee, for instance, is to develop and establish architectural guidelines and standards. The reaching of specific goals, such as this one, in a timely manner is how the committee ultimately accomplishes its overall purpose. If the committee loses sight of its goal, it could become issue oriented. It is important for each member to differentiate between the goals of the committee and their personal goals. Many times residents may become members of a committee because of their own personal needs, and thus they tend to lose sight of the goals of the association.

**Key 4. REWARDS**

This is the most important key. If rewards are given, they will almost guarantee successful committees. Rewards are easily given, but frequently overlooked. The recognition and appreciation expressed in a simple thank-you note, an article in the community newsletter thanking the committee for its time and effort, or a plaque or certificate presented to the committee at the annual meeting all go a long way toward involving members. Committees whose contributions are acknowledged are more willing to give their time and effort to the association. If everyone understands what the committee's purpose is and what is necessary for it to operate effectively, then the outcome should be positive and the word committee can become synonymous with success.
Who Should Do What

Boards need to understand the different types of committees in order to assign them tasks and functions which are compatible with their interests. Members on administrative committees such as Finance, Architectural Review, or Personnel, for example, enjoy decision-making and paperwork. Thus, the Architectural Review Committee should not be assigned the job of selecting or monitoring a community painting contractor. Members on operations committees such as Maintenance or Pool like to work with subcontractors on a detailed basis. Therefore, the Pool Committee should not necessarily be expected to put on pool parties. Members of program committees such as Improvements, Social, or Communications like to do things, hold parties, plant trees, bring the Police Chief in for a discussion on burglaries, etc. Another type of committee is an ad hoc committee. Some roles for Ad Hoc Committees include: Elections, Community Goals, Bylaw Amendments, Management Agent Selection, Pet policies, etc. These committees are an excellent means of inviting former president, board member, or committee chairman to commit his time for a brief period to a special task that he is familiar with by virtue of his previous association service.
Reading #9: Keep or Toss?
By Jim Slaughter, ESQ.
Common Ground, May/June 2004

If your important documents aren’t so much a paper trail as a pulpy mess, don’t panic. You just need a good records-management system that tells you what to retain and what to destroy.

Order is most useful in the management of everything.... Its maxim is, A place for everything and everything in its place." These words, written by Scottish author Samuel Smiles in his 1875 book Thrift, remain good advice for community associations today—especially when it comes to maintaining records. Are your association's important documents located where you can get your hands on the most pertinent ones quickly? Or is everything all lumped together in the bottom drawer of an overflowing file cabinet? Do you keep your vital records and dispose of unimportant ones? Or, are your most significant papers, such as governing documents, likely to be found with correspondence from the first quarter of 2001, which you haven’t decided whether you’re supposed to keep? What your association may need is a quality records-management system, which can make it easier to prepare taxes, prove losses to your insurance company, challenge bank or vendor records when necessary, and even establish what happened in the event of a lawsuit. To create such a system, you have to answer three questions: How should you maintain your association records? Which documents do you need to save, and for how long? And, how should you destroy unnecessary records?

HOW TO MAINTAIN

Technology has made it much easier to store large quantities of information in relatively little space. Thus, you can keep old-fashioned hard copies of your records, or you can put them on floppy disks or compact discs, optical scans, web-based systems, or DVDs. Different situations call for different techniques, based in part on your financial resources, the sheer volume of your records, and how often you’ll need to access them.

The important thing to remember is that bigger and brighter isn't always better. Let’s say you’re a large association with voluminous correspondence that you’ve begun scanning to DVD. The advantage to this system is that it allows you to retrieve any record you’ve ever produced, perhaps indefinitely. The disadvantage is that, after several years, finding a single page among thousands might prove difficult. Plus, do you really need to permanently archive that letter telling staff when to seed the grounds?

Realize also that technology changes. If your association saved documents to floppy disk just a few years ago, you may already find it difficult to retrieve
that information—or even to buy a computer with a disk drive. Sometimes a simple paper copy is the best protection.

Once you understand the promise and the peril of advancing technology, consider how best to store everything you need to keep. To start, if you have a management contract or written policy stating that certain records are to be maintained for a certain time, do it! In the event you go to court, there is nothing worse than having to admit that records "were not kept in the course of a regularly conducted business activity." While formal document-retention policies are more common in the for-profit world than the association industry, many of the essentials are the same. According to Sharon Nelson and John Simek, of Sensei Enterprises Inc., a legal technology and computer forensics company in Fairfax, Virginia, a corporate document-retention policy typically specifies:

1. How long, how, and where to store both paper and electronic records, including the manner in which they should be organized and catalogued so they can be recovered with relative ease.
2. How records should be destroyed when their retention period has expired.
3. The circumstances under which the policy should be suspended, such as when a lawsuit is anticipated or in progress, a subpoena has been served, or an investigation is underway.
4. The individuals responsible for enforcing, monitoring, and updating the policy.
5. Penalties for non-compliance.

No matter what storage method you choose, understand that the benefits of a good records-management system extend beyond questions of liability. I've seen managers save the day by quickly locating an important document in the middle of a heated board meeting.

**WHAT TO KEEP**

Because document-retention rules vary on a case-by-case basis, and because laws vary from state to state, there is no one-size-fits-all rule. Instead, you should make an informed decision about each specific type of document. On pages 112-113, you'll find a sample records retention chart with a number of documents your association may need to maintain. The purpose of this schedule is twofold: to help you keep track of the types of documents your association produces, and to encourage you to discuss with your attorney and accountant the minimum retention period for each, based on state laws and standard practice.

Sentry Group, a Fairport, New York-based manufacturer of safes, notes that when it comes to personal records, you should keep different documents for different lengths of time—sometimes indefinitely. Similarly, you can distinguish between those association records that should be kept forever and those that can be tossed after a minimum length of time.

**Permanent.** Documents that should be maintained permanently include
current and past governing documents, including CC&Rs, articles of incorporation, and bylaws, plus any amendments to them. Minutes from membership and board meetings also fall into the permanent category, as do tax returns and government reports dealing with tax liability. Finally, never get rid of your accounting ledger, even after the books are closed.

**Varying.** Other important documents should be kept for various minimum lengths. Store all your contracts—for management, landscaping, maintenance, and pest control, among other things—for at least seven years after they expire, and insurance policies for four years after they expire. Retain employment, personnel, bank, and credit-card records for at least six years, and mortgage and loan papers for three years after you make the final payment.

**Taxes.** While you should keep your tax returns permanently, the documents you use to prepare them are another matter. The IRS gives no specific guidance, but merely states that supporting records must be kept "for as long as they are important for any federal tax law." In practical terms, the statute of limitations on many tax issues doesn't run out for six years, so a safe course is to maintain any records that document income or deductions, including employment records, canceled checks, bank statements, and invoices, for at least six years after you file. Recognize, however, that if you plan on using these documents to justify future tax returns, such as depreciation on property, you should keep them beyond that future date.

**Legal.** Evaluate records that reflect legal action (or possible legal action) on a case-by-case basis. For example, copies of judgments, liens, and foreclosures are not irreplaceable—after all, the original documents are filed at the courthouse. Typically, causes of action to pursue delinquent homeowners expire three years from the failure to pay. However, statutes of limitations vary by state. For instance, lawsuits pertaining to documents that are signed "under seal," such as filed real-estate records, may be allowed for up to 10 years. As a result, you should keep legal documents for at least six to 10 years after the occurrence that led to any liability, subject to the advice of your attorney.

Also, as noted above, litigation changes everything. Unless you have received specific advice from your attorney, do not discard and do not apply your standard retention policy to any documents pertaining to a pending civil or criminal lawsuit. If your association is involved in a lawsuit, you'll be punished—sometimes badly—for disposing of evidence related to the suit.

**Electronic.** The general rules described above are no different for electronic documents, such as text files (including word-processing documents), presentation files (such as PowerPoint), spreadsheets, e-mails, graphic files, databases, calendars, and backup files. What is different with electronic records is how you store them. Typically, the choices are to print out electronic documents and keep a hard copy or to download them and
maintain a copy in a separate format, such as on a CD.

**Who?** A side issue to the question of how long to maintain your documents is who should maintain them. One of the worst records-management systems I see—all too regularly—is a box of documents that gets transferred from board secretary to board secretary. This is unforgivable, a tactic better suited to a local garden club than a nonprofit business entrusted with its residents’ money.

I’ve also heard association officers say that their management companies maintain all their documents. While it’s nice to have that level of trust in your professionals, you have to realize that allowing a management company to hold onto your documents while they’re relevant to the company’s work is not the same thing as having a long-term records-management system. Even if you have a management contract that stipulates otherwise, the ultimate responsibility for association records retention belongs to the association itself. As a result, you should consider keeping your older hard-copy records on-site (assuming you have an office), in a safe-deposit box, in a storage facility, or with a records-management company.

**HOW TO DISPOSE**

Figuring out what you need to keep and for how long means that, eventually, you’ll have a stack of outdated records to throw out. At this point, you need to ask who has been entrusted with the documents—your association itself, or someone else, such as your management company.

If the documents are your responsibility, you can destroy them in one of several ways, including shredding, incinerating, and pulverizing. While no particular technique is mandatory, the method you choose should preserve the confidentiality of the documents, which may include sensitive legal advice or grievances against the association. So, whatever you do, don't just throw everything into a wastebasket.

If other parties are caring for your documents, they should understand their obligations, and destroy records only with your association's consent. Without such consent, a management company or other group should be wary of disposing of anything belonging to a client.

The best course of action is to specify how outdated association documents are to be handled in your records-management policy. For instance, the policy might provide that your management company will notify the association that certain documents will be destroyed unless the association retrieves the files within a certain amount of time. If the association indicates it wants the documents, a reasonable opportunity for retrieval should be given; upon receipt of the documents, the association should sign a form certifying the pickup. If your association doesn't want the files, they can be disposed of in a way that preserves confidentiality—usually shredding.
Destroying electronic documents is a bit more challenging. As is widely known these days, "deleting" a computer file does not actually remove the information. For that matter, deleting a file from Microsoft Windows’ Recycle Bin doesn't eliminate the actual information either. As a result, if you're simply deleting electronic files and then later throwing away your computer, you may be giving your most confidential information to anyone who has some technical know-how and owns a software utility program. If your computer files must be kept private, realize you may have to take additional steps to truly dispose of the information they contain. You might buy special software designed to erase electronic data, for example, or physically destroy the disc itself.

While no record storage and retrieval system is perfect, that's not really the point. Instead, your goal is to develop a system that allows you to keep all those pieces of paper only as long as you need them, and to find important records when it counts. In this way, your association really will have a place for everything and everything in its place.

**RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE**

You should hold onto some records forever. But for others, the retention period will vary according to what state you live in and what information the documents contain. Review this list with your attorney or accountant to determine how long you should keep each record.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record</th>
<th>Located (Y/N)?</th>
<th>Retention Period?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ownership/membership records</td>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeds, plats, maps</td>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing documents—declaration, covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&amp;Rs or DCC&amp;Rs), master deed (current and past, plus amendments)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing documents—corporate charter/articles of incorporation (current and past, plus amendments)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing documents—bylaws (current and past, plus amendments)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing documents—board policies/resolutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Governing documents—restrictions and rules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Governing documents—architectural approved and disapproved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing documents—architectural guidelines (current and past)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minutes book—annual meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minutes book—board of directors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Minutes—committees</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Employee</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee personnel records</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payroll records and summaries</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Financial</strong></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and receivable ledgers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bank statements, canceled items, and reconciliation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates of deposit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial statements (year-end, other months optional)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>General ledgers (and year-end trial balances)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Checks (canceled for important payments, e.g., taxes, purchases of property)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation schedules</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Inventories</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Invoices</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Billing (owners) records</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notes payable documentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchase orders</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Subsidiary ledgers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Audits and/or year-end financials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax returns</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax documents relating to preparation of tax returns</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>General</strong></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contracts (current and expired)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence (general)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence (legal and important matters)</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Legal/Insurance/Claims</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Court filings and pleadings (foreclosures, small-claims actions, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accident reports and claims (current and settled)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance policies (current)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance policies (expired)</td>
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</table>
Reading #10: Record Retention Means Future Protection
By Barbara D. Wick
Common Ground

Any well-run business maintains detailed documentation on its assets and its various expenses. That documentation provides both a financial history for the organization, and forms the basis on which future planning can be done and expenditure projections made. Insurance documents have one additional obvious value, i.e. providing evidence of the existence of coverage in the event of an insurance loss. The value of this documentation becomes clear when we remember that purchase of insurance is really purchase of a promise for a payment in the event of a future accident or occurrence.

While many insurable losses experienced by community associations are immediately evident, e.g. damage to owned property and injuries to employees of the association, others can appear months or years after the incident which caused the loss. Most common among these are bodily injuries and personal injuries to persons on the premises or interacting with the association; increasingly more common are Directors and Officers Liability claims. Because these claims can be made after the end of a policy period and because obligation may lie with the insured to prove existence of coverage, it is important that the association rely on more than its memory to determine the type of insurance coverage and the insurance company involved.

That means maintaining detailed records of what policies were in place with what companies for what time periods. The most reliable means of maintaining these records is keeping copies of policies in force for at least five years after their expiration and preferably for a period of up to 10 years. (It could be argued that once the statute of limitations has expired, the evidence of coverage could be destroyed. However, because extenuating circumstances could exist, we'd recommend caution in this record retention.) It would also be judicious to keep a log of the policies, their numbers, policy periods, a brief summary of the coverages in place, identity of the agent who provided the coverage, the premiums paid, and the losses incurred.

The insurance industry has a phrase which alludes to the appearance of claims after the policy period: long tail coverage. Liability losses most commonly appear late. According to the Best Guide, 10% appear within the first year after the policy year, 21% appear within the second year, 33% within the third year, and 62% within the following two years.

Failure to have complete records could well lead to denial of coverage by the insurance company. However, associations should be aware of the fact that most states also require that insurance agents and insurance companies maintain records themselves of the coverage which they had in force in any particular year and that these records be accessible in the event of a loss.
While a typical length of time to require record keeping is seven years, this may vary by state and by coverage and thus should be checked within your own region. Such a requirement increases the value of maintaining a log of coverage, including names of companies, policy numbers and names of agents, even if hard copy policies are not retained, to provide guidance in searching these carriers.

A related set of records are those of any losses which are reported, whether they immediately lead to a claim or not. Because of the lag time on filing of claims, discussed above, it is essential in the defense of any claim to have a detailed record of what the association (directly or through its manager) knew of the original incident. There is no better way to retain such records than in writing, logging each incident and conversation. A clear statement of what was reported, what happened, and what was observed by the association, especially if no insurance company investigation was made, including dates and specific quotations, could be key to a successful defense of a fraudulent claim, such as a bodily injury which was not the result of association negligence.

While having evidence of coverage in the event of a claim is the most important and obvious reason for keeping insurance documentation, such records and related support information can play a number of other roles for associations. First, the Condominium Act may require such maintenance. For example, in Illinois the statute specifies several years for such records.

Second, retaining copies of insurance proposals and correspondence received during the selection and negotiation process can provide a check against which to compare the contracts actually delivered and the expectations which the association has. Should what is delivered not be as promised, the association will have evidence of what it expected on which to base its demand for delivery of what was contracted.

Further, should a loss later occur which the association expected to have covered and that coverage be denied, evidence of what was promised, particularly if not in conformity with policies actually delivered, can be key to compel the insurance company to deliver what was promised. Written documentation beyond the contract language itself may not be binding, but it certainly provides evidence for use by the association of what it believed it was purchasing. Such potential lack of conformity is also a good reason for having any promises supported in writing rather than just delivered verbally.

Because insurance plays such a key piece in any association's asset protection program, careful records should be made of what is and is not considered in that program. Regular review of the covered items and the property values can be a useful base for developing a new program. Indeed, while annual reviews and updates should be made and independent inspections and definitions of exposures should be made, it will be far simpler
to start with a known field and update it than to start from ground zero each year.

These records can also provide valuable documentation in the event of a loss, in a situation in which the association must prove the extent and value of what it has lost. That burden of proof will be on the association, not on the insurance company, and the more documentation available the better. (That documentation should include photographs, receipts, appraisals, and other such evidence.)

Another situation which occasionally arises is the need to have evidence that proper coverage was in place in order to assist a unit owner with a dispute with a mortgage company (e.g. a mortgage company may purchase coverage on its own if it does not receive certificate evidence of association coverage, that charge may be able to be removed if the association can provide evidence of the coverage) or in the event of his own loss.

Thus, while it may seem burdensome to retain such records and while it would seem that one could rely on the insurance agent or the insurance company to retain these records for you, such retention can provide valuable evidence that will protect the association's assets in the future and can form the basis for as current and complete as possible a risk management evaluation of the property and its loss exposures. They should be assembled and protected as are any other valuable legal documents and only transferred with received signatures.
Reading #11: Unleash the Power Within
Robert Schwarting
Common Ground, January/February 2002

Strategic planning is more than a fully funded reserve account. It's a way to channel your goals, your visions—even your dreams.

Three years ago, the large-scale community in upstate New York that I now manage found itself at a crossroads. Construction was supposed to take 10 years, but after 24 years, only two-thirds of its homes and three-fourths of its corporate park were completed. Worse, the long-time manager had left, and a series of contentious issues between residents and the developer had swept an entirely new board of directors into power.

In short, there was a break in tradition, and a whole new set of players. And, after nearly a quarter of a century, the community was ready for a new vision.

It was a perfect time for strategic planning.

MISSION CONTROL
"It's hard to remember that the mission is to drain the swamp when you spend all day fighting with the alligators." Most organizational leaders, including board members and community managers, experience this on a daily basis. For some it's so pervasive as to produce an extreme case of tunnel vision—or a particularly deep rut.

Some communities are more aware of this than others. They recognize that they've lost sight of their mission, or that the mission itself has shifted. (See "Why and When?," below.) Many want to climb out of the rut, and they start looking for a way. Strategic planning is exactly that—a way out, and a way beyond. It's financial planning, reserve analysis, brainstorming, and dreaming, all rolled together. It's also an opportunity for board members to be effective leaders, and to look at their community and their residents honestly and positively.

As there are many reasons to undertake strategic planning, so there are many methods to go about it. Highly structured businesses tend to hew closely to traditional marketing and accounting procedures, while more loosely organized, laid-back companies opt for a "total quality team" approach. In civic and quasi-government organizations, strategic planning often uses techniques found in social planning and grassroots development.

Because of the multidisciplinary nature of community associations, there is no one-size-fits-all model for planning. The traditions of your community, its tolerance level for unfamiliar processes, and the experiences of your key
leaders will determine which approach you take. Associations that are closely controlled by developers may feel most comfortable with the business model, while boards that have strong staffs and very active neighborhoods may opt for a more grassroots process. Or, you may want to hone in on one portion of the complete strategic-planning process--vision making, for example, as a way to move away from micromanagement and toward community building, or financial projection, to open your budget process to a wider audience and generate a broader consensus for expenditures. It all depends on what you’re trying to do.

At the Radisson Community Association, we had several advantages. First, staff and volunteers had both the skills and the commitment to conduct the process in-house. Three members of our Long-Range Planning Committee had direct experience with strategic planning--one as an administrator at a large state university, and two as civic group leaders who participated in a huge vision-making process for the city of Syracuse. Additionally, before coming to Radisson, I had been a regional planner and an organizational development facilitator.

Another advantage was our board’s established history of planning, which had made use of skilled volunteers and, when necessary, outside consultants. There was also a comprehensive reserve-study process in place. These traditions meant that we didn’t have to convince board members to undertake a long-term, open planning process--or talk them into working with competent volunteers.

VISION QUEST

If anything, Radisson was more focused on vision formation than specific goals and budgets. We wanted to provide residents with better and more appropriate services and amenities, not just readjust our annual goals. We’re still growing, with 2,100 of 3,400 homes completed, so keeping the community attractive to new and resale buyers was a high priority. Thus, we asked ourselves: How can we do more--and do it better?

Guest speakers. To kick things off, the Long-Range Planning Committee invited two speakers to share their expertise on community strategic planning at a special meeting. One speaker was from the business school faculty at the nearby State University of New York at Oswego, while the other had helped lead a vision-making commission for the city of Syracuse. The experts helped in several ways. First, they provided technical knowledge and helped us think through the process. More important, their seminar helped attract and empower our core volunteers--mostly board and committee members, as well as dedicated residents with planning experience. By the end of the seminar, three members of the planning committee and six new volunteers had become our strategic-planning gurus.

Input sessions. To gather the information that would help develop our
vision, we held two input sessions in our community center. Rather than leave anything to chance, the planning team solicited representatives of different geographic areas, demographic groups, and volunteer committees. Their instincts were good: Of the 60 or so residents who attended the sessions, about half had been specifically invited.

The format for the two sessions was a composite that we lifted from various planning guides for nonprofit groups, for-profit companies, and municipalities. Eventually, we ended up with a modified "SWOT" approach, focusing on strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and threats. We decided not to narrow the discussion to strategies or to lay out a conventional plan, but instead kept the emphasis on inventing change, redefining (or reconfirming) the community mission, and reaching for our dreams.

The most important task was to keep the sessions positive and focused on brainstorming and innovating. Because of my experience in this area, I served as facilitator. (Whenever possible, have a skilled, experienced person fill this vital role.) We had an ambitious, 16-point agenda that began with "Welcome and review of the ground rules (be positive, encourage everyone)" and ended with "Thanks and confirming the need for feedback to participants"; in between, we touched on brainstorming and meditation, and even had an "icebreaker: talking about my ideal community." At three points during the sessions--envisioning, identifying strengths, and identifying opportunities--attendees worked in small groups, which generated more ideas and also encouraged everyone to participate. The small groups then reported their results to the whole meeting, engendering still more brainstorming.

About 60 strategies emerged from the two sessions. They included recruiting and electing residents to local boards and agencies, providing flexibility for new materials in the architectural standards, involving youth in governance, creating a wellness center, and promoting increased interaction and connectivity among residents.

Interim work. The input sessions generated hundreds of flip-chart pages, which showed threads of ideas and hinted at several dominant goals and actions. Working closely with local college students whom we retained for our process, I transcribed these pages into useful lists and summaries, which we circulated to staff and the entire planning team. Staff proposed some additional possibilities.

Our project leaders then met to, as one of them put it, "look at the huge, thick stew of ideas, dreams, strengths, opportunities, goals, and actions" found in the summaries. In their two meetings, they were able to develop a feel for the concrete issues embedded in the sometimes vaguely worded dreams and ideas, and to organize different goals and actions into groups of strategies. In the process, they also confirmed the association's dominant
missions and values. At a follow-up session with the input groups, they proposed six major strategic focuses:

- The "new community" concept/philosophy
- Health and wellness
- Secure, friendly, and attractive community
- Socially active and interactive community
- Arts and culture
- Enforcing, maintaining, and amending the covenants

**Third session.** We convened a third input session to convert our regrouped data and visions into strategies, which were then reported in draft form to the board, our committees, and anyone who participated in any of the sessions. The board took up the report at a work session, openly discussing our philosophy and specific intent with the planning team. During the discussion, the board suggested that the many comments about our young residents scattered throughout the report be combined into a seventh strategic focus on youth. The board also reaffirmed our consensus-building efforts and encouraged the team's plan to solicit more input from the community.

**Community poll.** At this point, we deviated from traditional strategic planning and went to the community to confirm that we had a workable plan. We posed about 80 questions to a poll group, which was a pool of 250 residents representing all ages, social groups, tenants, owners, and neighborhoods. Specifically, we wanted to know what everyone thought about our new and proposed programs and facilities and the actions we were considering to achieve them.

The completed surveys confirmed most of the strategies generated by the volunteers at our input sessions—and, more important, they helped us prioritize our steps. Our residents ranked youth- or teen-related programs as the highest priority, and placed covenants maintenance above providing more flexibility. Questions about health and wellness, community interaction, and arts and culture drew less clear responses, but two proposed facilities—a YMCA-like center and an adult clubhouse-restaurant—garnered strong mandates. Thus, our planning team and our board placed youth programs and these two capital facilities among Radisson's highest priorities. Backed by this resident input, the board and the committee leaders had a high level of confidence in the strategic plan and integrated it into our draft budget.

The entire process, from formation of the core leadership to the first expenditure of budgeted funds, took one year—which isn't much of an
investment when you consider that this plan will be a valuable resource for the next four to five years.

FEELING GOOD

Our strategic plan is now two years old, and has proven to be an extremely successful and useful product. But its greatest value was not as a document, but as a process that created awareness, understanding, and a proactive mindset.

Now that many of the objectives we set forth have been achieved, the board has asked the Long-Range Planning Committee to start another round of vision making. The idea is to fine-tune our strategic plan--to identify new agendas, reprioritize our efforts, and renew the consensus that helped create the plan. Perhaps just as important, board members hope that this latest process will help identify, empower, and motivate new community leaders.

In retrospect, Radisson's experience with strategic planning was exceptionally good. It generated not just a plan but a coordinated movement. Our constant back-and-forth with input groups and surveys may have seemed repetitive, but from it emerged a broadly held understanding of the community and its future. The open dialogue among the board, staff, and committees built on this, creating a movement toward making our vision a reality even as the planning process was still underway.

This coordinated, consensual movement was, by far, more important than the plan itself. Residents report feeling good about the community and thinking that the leadership is steering Radisson in the right direction. They should feel good. After all, it was their dreams, visions, and thoughts that the board and staff were listening to, using, and pursuing.

Robert Schwarting was executive director of the Radisson Community Association, in Baldwinsville, New York, which received an honorable mention in the 2001 National Community Association of the Year Awards program.
WHY AND WHEN?

Some members of your community may be leery of expending the time, effort, and resources that go into any good strategic plan. Why, they might ask, do we need a strategic plan?

You can answer this question by figuring out the answer to another question: When? As in, when is it time for strategic planning? Every community is different, but, in general, there are a few indicators:

Growth and evolution. Oftentimes, a community changes, but its mission remains the same. So, figure out if your community has grown and your residents’ needs have evolved, and if your vision, programs, and procedures have followed suit.

Management vs. leadership. There's an old adage that says, "Managers do things right. Leaders do the right things." (In this case, I mean "manager" in the general, non-industry-specific sense of the term.) Both functions are necessary. Is your board providing leadership that sees beyond the details of day-to-day operations?

Poor results. If your residents are noticeably unhappy, or your board members seem to be chasing their tails, your community has lost touch with doing what is right.

No community. Have you ever asked your residents to help rewrite your mission statement (assuming you have one) in their words? What dreams excite their passions? Too many board members and managers are threatened by the thought of asking residents to articulate their dreams. Most can adopt rules, pass resolutions, and execute programs in accordance with policies and procedures, but few know how to build community. Strategic planning offers boards a chance to push back from the table and look beyond the issues--to innovate, to think about change and evolution, and to look critically and objectively at processes and conditions.

When any or all of these problems exist, it's time to think about strategic planning. Done correctly, it will remedy these situations and answer our initial question: Why plan? Because it's the right thing to do.

-R.S.
Strategic Planning Checklist

STARTUP

- Identify and recruit a cadre of 20 empowered people who can lead and manage the planning process.
- Train, support, and encourage these leaders.

VISION MAKING

- Conduct brainstorming sessions in a subset of the community, organize this input, and announce it to the community as a whole.
- Conduct more brainstorming—throughout the entire community—and announce that.
- Confirm all the input and build consensus for it.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- Create a narrative plan—a blueprint for strategic change (values, missions, goals, objectives, programs, and facilities) that, ideally, becomes a touchstone for leaders at all levels.
- Adopt the narrative plan as formal guidance for staff and committees.
- Translate the narrative plan into concrete ancillary plans (capital plans, social/recreation plans, governance and procedures, and so on).
- Translate the narrative and ancillary plans into budgets, staff work plans, committee annual goals, and objectives.

PERIODIC PLANNING

- Revise your ancillary plans annually, as committees are rechartered and as budgets are proposed, evaluated, and adopted.
- Inform residents of progress, impediments, and changes.
- Solicit periodic feedback from stakeholders—especially residents, volunteers, and staff who play a major role.

MORE VISION MAKING

- Renew your vision every three to five years, to take into account shifting preferences, tastes, needs, and demographics.
- Adjust for major internal changes, such as departures of key leaders or staff that will affect your strengths and capabilities.
- Stay on top of major changes outside your community, including boom or bust cycles in the economy.

-R.S.
RESOURCE

Best Practices Report #3: Strategic Planning. Available free from the CAI Research Foundation. To obtain a copy, visit www.cairf.org; call CAI’s Faxback service, at (703) 836-6904, document #560; or call CAI Central, at (703) 548-8600.
Reading #12: Doing Things Right, Or Doing the Right Thing? How Strategic Planning Works for Community Associations
Debra Lewin
Common Ground, January/February 2000

Physicists used to seek out the basic building blocks of matter. These days they're looking instead at the relationships between subatomic particles because they suspect the relationships are the building blocks. This change required a shift in perspective and belief in a paradox.

Managers, CEOs, and sometimes boards, are used to managing, organizing, and controlling. These days they're using strategic planning to add vision and values because they suspect there is as much value in learning to make decisions together as in the plan itself.

What Is Strategic Planning?

Simply stated, strategic planning is a process whereby you figure out where you're going and how you're going to get there. There are several ways to approach strategic planning, but a basic model (and a good place to start) includes these steps:

Assess your current position. Some call it the SWOT approach - what are your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats? Knowing where you are now helps get you where you want to be in the future. Consider political, environmental, demographic, economic and similar factors.

Identify your purpose. This is your "mission statement." For example, "Sunny Acres Homeowner's Association exists to ensure the highest possible quality of life for citizens 55 years and older."

Set goals that identify what you need to accomplish in order to achieve the mission. One of Sunny Acres biggest goals is to integrate technology extensively throughout the community. The board is thinking way ahead -- they're thinking strategically. They recognize that technology is affecting everyone's quality of life significantly and rapidly. Ironically, their constituents are unprepared for and highly resistant to using computers.

Decide how to meet your goals. Sunny Acres decided they needed to familiarize their residents with computers and raise confidence in using online services. They also must educate themselves about future technologies and educate the residents on the benefits of those technologies. They must learn how to wire an entire community, how to pay for it, and how to get the right help.

Develop an action plan. Sunny Acres action plan includes developing a public
awareness campaign for residents, working with the local community college to provide on-site computer classes, working with local service providers to obtain incentives, such as free online banking, and meeting with computer and communications providers to begin developing a master plan.

Monitor and update your plan. Sunny Acres board is monitoring their strategic plan quarterly. As they learn about new technologies and new possibilities, they sometimes find that their earlier ideas and goals were shortsighted or uninformed. They're updating their plan accordingly.

**What Strategic Planning Isn't**

Strategic planning isn't long-range planning. Long-range planning is about maintaining stability based on today's trends. Strategic planning is about changing to meet future opportunities. Long-range planning ensures that you do things right. Strategic planning ensures that you do the right thing.

Sunny Acres clearly planned to meet future opportunities even though their current residents wanted little to do with technology. Thinking strategically made them realize that their community wouldn't attract future residents if it wasn't wired- or, at least, technology-ready.

**Steps for Success**

Assemble a good planning team. You have to have complete involvement, consensus and support from everyone involved.

Tailor the process to meet your needs. Once you've found a model that looks like it will work for you, tailor it to your unique circumstances and needs. The key is to find the tools and techniques that work for your culture, capabilities, environment, and desired outcome.

Seek out information and use what's really pertinent. Use only information that focuses on your real needs, and consider all available sources - including employees, residents, vendors, and other associations.

Analyze carefully. Spend more time analyzing your data than gathering it. Try using techniques like scenario planning, simulation, or role playing to aid the analysis.

Avoid bias. If you look for evidence that confirms what you're doing rather than what challenges it, your strategic plan will be weakened.

Identify what makes you unique. Figuring out what makes you different from other communities allows you to rethink what you're doing, how you're allocating resources, and making decisions.
Keep it simple. Make your strategic plan something everyone can understand. Use plain language and avoid acronyms or other shortcuts that may cause confusion. This makes monitoring and updating easier also.

First the plan, then the budget. The strategic plan should drive your annual budget. If you prepare the budget before you develop or update your strategic plan, you've produced a de facto strategic plan with none of the benefits of the planning process. Be prepared to slash some beloved programs that do not achieve the objectives of the plan and to expend resources in areas that may be controversial.

Integrate daily processes with the strategic plan. The strategic plan must be an integral part of your daily operations.

Be willing to commit resources. Temporarily excuse employees from their daily responsibilities to work on developing, monitoring, and updating the strategic plan. This not only applies the necessary resources to the process; but, employees take a commitment to and knowledge of the plan back into the work environment when they return to their regular tasks.

**After the Plan is Complete**

Completing the strategic plan is not the end of the process - it's actually the beginning. It feels like a great accomplishment, and it is, but don't put it on the shelf just yet.

Implement. Perhaps the hardest part of strategic planning is doing what you planned. It takes discipline, will, and flexibility to get your plan integrated into your daily, weekly, and monthly routine.

Communicate. Share the plan with everyone including residents, managers, attorneys, and accountants, vendors, suppliers, contractors - even community and government officials. Make the document attractive, easy to produce, and inviting.

Monitor. Check your progress against the plan at least quarterly. Also, ask yourself if the underlying assumptions and objectives are still valid and whether the plan needs to be updated to accommodate unanticipated events.

Update. Your strategic plan should be a living document. Review and update it at least once a year -- before you develop the annual budget. You may not need a thorough update every year; but, if you're still using the plan you developed three years ago, it's time to throw it out and start over. Also, if your community undergoes a major change, reevaluate your plan immediately and question its underlying assumptions.

Strategic planning can be as simple or complex a process as you want it to
be. The Internet and your local library have lots of good resources to familiarize you with the various models and how to implement them (one particularly good web site is http://entrepreneurs.about.com/smallbusiness/entrepreneurs/cs/strategicplanning).

Even the simplest approach will produce useful results. Consider using this process for your company or association if you want to achieve success, grow, and prepare for the future.
Reading #13: Resolutions that Stick

Jill McCrory and Steve Swafford
CEO Insights, November/December 2001

Like a December diet that's forgotten by spring, New Year's goals often fall by the wayside. Taking stock of the old year and mapping out plans for a new one is an important step, but it's only the first one. Goal-setting sessions should be more than a check mark on a to-do list. Reaching goals takes year-round involvement and a commitment to some fundamental guidelines for achievement.

* Create a Simple Mission Statement What is the mission of your organization? Why do you exist? Disney's mission is "To make people happy." A mission statement captures the purpose behind what everyone does—from the routine (like staff meetings), to the details (like on-site inspections), to the big-picture projects (like roofing replacements)—and should be easy to understand, easy to explain, and reflect your company's philosophy.

* Involve Everyone Employees look to leaders to help define a vision for an organization, but reaching goals is always a team effort. The same is true for setting goals. Input from diverse areas helps uncover problems at all levels. Often employees have the best perspective on things that need changing. If everyone is involved in the process of setting goals, they'll have more of a stake in reaching them.

* Define Goals Clearly Goals must be measurable and must answer three questions: How much, by when, and with how many? Often such goals as "improve the newsletter," or "offer more education opportunities," are too vague. Make sure your employees know enough detail to be able to tell when the goal has been reached. Be specific.

* Put Goals in Writing Putting goals in writing will help clarify, focus, and define what you've set out to do. Keep your goals where you and employees can see them daily. This will remind everyone of that shared mission and keep motivation to follow through high.

* Set a Timeline for Achievement. Specify deadlines, and due dates, and reevaluate them often as other projects come along. Use the timeline to prioritize and readjust as necessary.

* Prioritize. Each goal should be prioritized so that your employees understand how much of their workday should be devoted to working toward it. Sitting down with your employees to discuss goals is a key way to help them visualize success. The following tips will help make sure your conversation has a lasting impact:
* Take calculated risks. Goals should be high, but not impossible. Evaluate each goal to determine the possible negative consequences or stumbling blocks and come up with some ways to overcome them.

* Decrease stress. For many employees, setting goals can cause undue levels of stress. If an employee seems overwhelmed or helpless when faced with new tasks, consider lowering goals that are set too high, providing training for lack of skills, giving more control and authority over how work gets done, making goals more specific, and making sure that goals don't conflict with one another.

* Tackle the fear of failure. Sometimes employees need a little extra incentive to achieve difficult goals. Be sure to treat some goals as guidelines, and never use goals as tools to punish those who fall short. Make sure employees know that effort counts as much as results. Find the silver lining in failed objectives.

* Keep achieving. Sometimes attaining a goal means the end of performance. Monitor progress regularly, and make sure that when goals are achieved, new ones are created.

Jill McCrory is "ringleader" and Steve Swafford is "balance warrior" of Leadership Outfitters Inc., in Arlington, Virginia (www.leadershipoutfitters.com).
Reading #14: Kickoff Meeting Minutes

Trilogy at La Quinta Maintenance Association
Initial Strategic Planning Session
Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG)
December 17, 2008

Attendees:

Staff in Attendance:
Facilitator, Kirk Watilo, Action Property Management

The initial TLQMA Strategic Planning Session was held on December 17, 2008 and the two homeowner board members and standing committee chairs and the entire Finance Committee was invited. Staff in attendance were the Business Services Manager, the Director of Lifestyles and Operations Director.

The Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG) discussed the following at their kickoff meeting:
A. Planning Process that will be followed
B. Discussed who should be included in the process (the working group was of the opinion that we should be inclusive rather than exclusive), meaning that through the Standing Committee process, others may be involved in the discussion and those comments will flow to the SPWG through the Committee Chair. Discussions were also held about obtaining resident feedback through written surveys, web site responses, etc.
C. Listed some core values of this community
D. Identified a potential Mission or Vision Statement
E. Identified some goals to achieve the Vision/Mission Statement,
F. Agreed to have the Transition Team work on a Charter for the SPWG and present it to the TLQMA Board at their January 22, 2009 Board meeting
G. Conducted a SWOT analysis
H. Potential Stakeholders

The next meeting will be after the SPWG charter is formally approved by the Board.

A. The Process
1. Identification of the Stakeholders that should be involved at any level of the process
2. Create Vision and Mission Statements
3. Develop Goals and Objectives that align with the Vision and Mission Statements
4. Conduct a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis
5. Communicate the concept, its structure, its development, the opportunities for resident input, and how the plan will be updated annually
6. Conduct a space needs analysis (including the Tour Center in the mix)
7. Develop a Capital needs analysis
8. Develop a 3-5 year financial plan
9. Conduct a Needs Assessment
10. Hold Stakeholder meetings
11. Set achievable goals
12. Develop a 3-5 year Strategic Plan

B. Who should be involved in the process?
The general consensus was to have as many people included in the process as desire to be, but with much of that involvement occurring at the standing committee level at the regularly scheduled standing committee meetings. It was also agreed that the membership of the SPWG at this first initial meeting is a good start and may need to be expanded slightly to include the entire Board of Directors. Committee liaisons and Committee Chairs will be a key component in the communication process, sharing information with the committees from the Board and likewise, from the committees and the resident input that occurs at that level to the Board.

C. Core Values Exercise
The SPWG identified the following core values for the Association:
   1. Right Pricing
   2. The Amenities
   3. Maintaining Lifestyles
   4. Social Aspects/Sense of Community
   5. Community Appearance/Beauty
   6. Maintain Property Values in a prudent fiscal manner

D. Potential Vision/Mission Statement
The Committee discussed the need to establish a Vision Statement. The Committee reviewed a couple of ideas and decided to have the following statement put on paper and sent out to the Committee for review and consideration.

Vision Statement for Trilogy at La Quinta Maintenance Association
“Maintain and enhance an environment and lifestyle to meet the needs and expectations of our current and future members in a fiscally prudent manner”

E. Identification of Goals to Achieve the Vision Statement
The Committee further evaluated some of the advanced work on this topic by Mr. Marsh and thought that some of the statements could serve as Goals that point to achieving the Vision Statement. They include:
   1. Provide and maintain an active country club living environment for the members
2. Protect, maintain and enhance the community infrastructure and amenities and the Members’ assets and quality of life and their lifestyles and property values
3. Provide, improve upon, and add amenities, social activities, and learning opportunities, while being sensitive to those items which serve the greatest number of Members.
4. Make informed decisions representative of the majority interest
5. Keep our community beautiful, safe, and environmentally sustainable

F. Strategic Planning Committee Charter
The Strategic Planning Committee Charter will be drafted by the Transition Team with assistance by Staff. The Charter will be submitted to the TLQMA Board for consideration at their January 22 Board meeting.

G. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats-(SWOT) Analysis
The SPWG conducted a SWOT Analysis and they are listed below:

Strengths
1. The people living at TLQ-active and committed to the common good, positive attitudes and caring individuals
2. Cost of ownership
3. The Golf Course/Restaurant amenity
4. Activities provided/Facilities
5. Location-local and regional (far enough away from it all but close enough to dining and shopping)
6. Staff responsiveness
7. Facility maintenance

Weaknesses
1. Location (proximity to commercial operations (groceries, services such as dry cleaning, hair, nails, etc.)
2. Foreclosures
3. Size of certain rooms in the Santa Rosa Club
4. Apathetic Owners (rear yard maintenance and compliance with the CC&R provisions)
5. Front gate Security (access control process and design)

Opportunities
1. Developer/HOA transition to resident member control
2. Become Nationally recognized for community events/activities/committee work inside and outside the community
3. Community outreach
4. Continue our strengths
5. Tour Center
6. External memberships (Spa and/or fitness)
7. Travertine Annexation (35 additional homes)
8. Non-member revenue
9. Golf course restaurant
10. Airport
11. Maintenance Yard for landscape contractor

Threats
1. Relationship with golf course owner (landscape maintenance, water usage agreements)- golf course subcommittee to be involved
2. Travertine parcel if a developer other than Shea is involved and it is not part of the association
3. Airport expansion
4. Meyers property
5. Ave 62/Monroe expansion
6. Foreclosures
7. Neighboring development
8. CVWD and rates
9. Part time owners

H. Potential Stakeholders
The list of potential stakeholders that have an “interest” in TLQ’s strategic planning is long and may have some of them involved in the process continuously and others only on a very limited, specific basis, such as at a committee meeting when a specific item is discussed. The list includes the following:
1. The SPWG
2. All Board members
3. Committee Chairs
4. Club representatives
5. Residents
6. Golf Course Owner
7. Shea Homes
8. Bluestar
9. Community Resources, such as City of La Quinta. County of Riverside, and outside agencies such as Animal Control, Vector Control, Water Resources boards
10. Adjacent parcel owners
Reading #15: Achieving Quorum

Marjorie Jean Meyer, CMCA, PCAM
Vice President and
Dean, Associa University
AssociaSM
mmeyer@associaonline.com

How many times have you tried to hold an official meeting of the members of your community association, only to find that not enough homeowners came to the meeting or sent in their proxies to meet the quorum requirement to conduct a legally held meeting? More often than not, the bylaws of the community don’t provide for alternatives if a quorum is not attained, so you’re faced with calling another meeting and perhaps yet another one still -- in a desperate attempt to elect board members and ratify decisions made at previous meetings where a quorum also was not reached. On the other hand, perhaps your legal counsel has advised that as long as you’ve made the attempt at calling the meeting and complied with notice requirements, you should continue with the agenda except for any issues requiring a vote and try again next year for a quorum. At the “unofficial” meeting, you could take a straw ballot of those present to fill vacant board positions or let the majority decide to allow the current directors to continue in their expired/renewed terms until a quorum is finally met. However, if you’re facing the bleak challenge of expending time and money reconvening meetings until the magic number of those present in person or by proxy is reached, perhaps some of the following suggestions will help you go over the top of your minimum quorum requirement the first time around.

- Vote with iBallot or another electronic voting system.
- Place yard signs at each entrance the day of the meeting detailing location and time of the meeting. (a courtesy officer may be necessary if community will look abandoned).
- Conduct a raffle to encourage proxy submission and state that it’s not necessary to be present to win.
- Award door prizes solicited from area or Internet merchants.
- Distribute coupons for free services from area retailers.
- Ask area merchant to sponsor the meeting/party.
- Distribute awards (plaques, certificates, plant, gift certificate) to recognize volunteers
• Invite an interesting speaker – politician, police officer, contractor
• Make the meeting a celebration of another successful year or of another “Birthday of the Association.” The actual meeting becomes incidental to the festivity to look to the future.
• Establish annual theme holidays (cities, countries, travel, Texas, games).
• Provide entertainment such as a magician or comedian.
• Provide babysitting service.
• Provide food (soda, snacks, cookies, ice cream, sandwiches).
• Broden meeting to be a pool party & barbecue.
• Send multiple mailings & reminders – detail the cost of each mailing and room rental to encourage proxy submission – use flyers, postcards, newsletters, and bulletin board/mail cluster postings.
• Send postage-paid postcard proxies, including option for quorum purposes only.
• Form an Annual Meeting Committee charged with achieving a quorum.
• Have the Annual Meeting Committee call owners who have not returned proxies.
• Hold meeting in a convenient/”cool” location or restaurant or neighboring community’s clubhouse.
• Provide transportation to offsite meeting location.
• Include a serious/controversial issue on the agenda.
• Announce that attendees will be able to sign important petition to City/County/State/Federal Government/Agency/Department/whomever.
• Ask attendees to bring donation for charity (canned goods, clothing).

If you implement one or more of the above, you’ve got a better chance of encouraging enough homeowners to either mail in their proxy or attend the meeting to reach that magic quorum number. When that happens, as the song says, “don’t worry -- be happy”. You achieved quorum and, hopefully, the meeting went off without a hitch because it was such a positive experience. Now it’s time to start preparing for next year . . .
Additional Resources
Sample Annual Meeting Checklist

60 DAYS PRIOR TO MEETING
☐ Candidate Form and Initial Notice distributed

30 DAYS PRIOR TO MEETING
☐ Official Notice and Proxy distributed

7 DAYS PRIOR TO MEETING
☐ Request sign in sheets
☐ Request Voting Roster
☐ Prepare Tally Sheet
☐ Have Ballots prepared (unless using mail-in ballots)
☐ Have copies of last year’s minutes made
☐ Customize Agenda and make copies

3 DAYS PRIOR TO MEETING
☐ Begin entering %’s on returned Proxies
☐ Enter Proxies returned on a Voting Roster

1 DAY PRIOR TO MEETING
☐ Collect the following supplies:
  ☐ Adding machine or laptop
  ☐ Ballot box
  ☐ Pens, pencils, stapler
  ☐ Declaration, By-Laws (with pertinent sections marked with post its)

1 HOUR PRIOR TO THE MEETING
☐ Set up sign-in table (s)
☐ Set up piles of handouts (agendas, minutes, etc.)
☐ Have Owners sign in (if a Proxy was already recorded, discard the proxy)
☐ Give a Ballot to each person in attendance (with the % of ownership entered on it)
☐ Check in Proxies brought to meeting, note % on proxy
☐ Attach Ballots to Proxies and distribute to the appointees to mark Ballots
☐ IF MAIL IN BALLOTS ARE USED, SEE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS INSTEAD

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS
☐ On the sign-in sheet, denote Proxies with a “P” and the date it was signed. If there are duplicate proxies, the later date is valid
☐ At large properties that anticipate a large turnout, arrange for more sign-in sheets and assistance
☐ Arrange the Agenda so that various discussions and reports can proceed while a quorum is being established
Sample Annual Meeting Preparations

☐ Request Certificates of Appreciation
☐ Reserve Meeting room
☐ Order lectern, microphone, chairs and registration table
☐ Buy name tags
☐ Need easel and poster board for each entrance, to direct homeowners to meeting location
☐ Prepare meeting notice, proxies, ballots, agenda, and sign-in sheet (ballots - different color for each percentage ownership)
☐ Put unit numbers and percentage on ballots if specified by association manager
☐ Make signs for registration table to divide registration; locate lamp for registration desk
☐ Have accounting prepare new signature cards
☐ Print list of all work orders for past year
☐ Prepare List of Accomplishments for presentation and distribution at meeting
☐ Locate previous year’s Annual Meeting Minutes
☐ Copy agenda, current balance sheet & income statement, current/proposed/upcoming budget and minutes
☐ Update mailing list names for CAI publications

Bring to meeting:

☐ Sign-in sheet
☐ Signs for registration table
☐ Percentage tally sheet for each nominee
☐ New signature cards
☐ Calculator
☐ Box of pens (charge association), tape and stapler
☐ Legal documents
☐ Lamp for registration desk
☐ Previous year’s minutes
☐ Current (or next year’s) budget
☐ Printout of all work orders
☐ Copies of current balance sheet & income statement
☐ Copies of agenda
☐ Certificates of Appreciation
☐ Check/receipt for meeting room rental
☐ Easel and poster board for each entrance
☐ Name tags
☐ Key to clubhouse/meeting room
Questions for Association Manager:
__ How many lines on ballot?
__ Need percentages on ballot?
__ Need delinquency status on ballots and/or sign-in sheet?

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:
- Do not give out proxies of absent owners at meeting - they must be retained for permanent archives.
  **DO** return proxies to owners who attend meeting.
- Do not release ballot if proxy is “for quorum purposes only”.
- Only release ballots to persons whose names appear on the sign-in sheet.
Sample Annual Meeting Script

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
2007 ANNUAL MEETING

October 30, 20XX

7:00 P.M.  CALL TO ORDER

PRESIDENT  WELCOMES ALL UNIT OWNERS AND THANKS THEM FOR ATTENDING

PRESIDENT INTRODUCES HIMSELF

PRESIDENT CONFIRMS THAT NOTICES OF THE MEETING WERE MAILED TO ALL OWNERS

PRESIDENT ASKS COMMUNITY MANAGER TO CONFIRM A QUORUM (AT LEAST _____ OWNERS BY PROXY OR IN PERSON); IF PRESENT, WE CAN PROCEED TO CONDUCT BUSINESS. (IF NOT PRESENT, WE CAN HOLD GENERAL DISCUSSION OF PERTINENT TOPICS, BUT MUST RECESS AND RESCHEDULE THE MEETING WHEN A QUORUM IS ACHIEVED, PREFERABLY THROUGH THE MAILED-IN PROXIES.)

7:05  INTRODUCTIONS

PRESIDENT INTRODUCES OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS:  VICE PRESIDENT; SECRETARY; ASST. SECRETARY; TREASURER; AND BOARD MEMBERS.

INTRODUCES COMMUNITY MANAGER AND ASSISTANT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MANAGER.

7:05  CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

PRESIDENT: "COPIES OF THE MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S ANNUAL MEETING WERE GIVEN TO YOU AT THE AT THE REGISTRATION DESK. I WOULD ASK FOR A MOTION NOW TO WAIVE THE READING OF THE MINUTES. IS THERE A MOTION? (PAUSE); IS THERE A SECOND? (PAUSE); ALL IN FAVOR VOTE "AYE". OPPOSED VOTE "NAY" MOTION PASSED. I WILL NOW ENTERTAIN A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED. (PAUSE); IS THERE A SECOND? (PAUSE); ARE THERE ANY CORRECTIONS, DELETIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THE MINUTES? (PAUSE); ANY FURTHER DISCUSSION? (PAUSE); ALL IN FAVOR VOTE 'AYE' (PAUSE); OPPOSED? (PAUSE); THE MINUTES ARE APPROVED."
7:07 DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS

PRESIDENT: "THERE IS/ARE ____ POSITION(S) ON THE BOARD UP FOR ELECTION TONIGHT FOR A _____-YEAR TERM. ’S POSITION HAS EXPIRED AND HE HAS OFFERED TO SERVE AGAIN IF NOMINATED.

PRESIDENT: "I WILL NOW ENTERTAIN NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR. ARE THERE ANY VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE AS A DIRECTOR OF ___________ HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.?" (THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT FOR A SECOND FOR A NOMINATION.)

WHEN IT APPEARS THAT NO ONE ELSE WISHES TO MAKE A NOMINATION, ASK ONCE MORE IF THERE ARE ANY FURTHER NOMINATIONS. IF THERE IS NO RESPONSE, DECLARE THE NOMINATIONS CLOSED WITHOUT WAITING FOR A MOTION TO THAT EFFECT.

7:10 NOMINEE SPEECHES

PRESIDENT: "EACH NOMINEE WILL BE ALLOWED THREE MINUTES TO PROVIDE A BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF HIM OR HERSELF AND DESCRIBE WHY HE OR SHE FEELS THAT HE OR SHE WOULD BE AN ASSET ON THE BOARD”

7:15 VOTE FOR ONE BOARD MEMBER

PRESIDENT: "PLEASE WRITE DOWN ON YOUR BALLOT THE ONE NOMINEE YOU WOULD LIKE TO REPRESENT YOU ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. JUST HOLD UP YOUR BALLOTS WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED, AND OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM WILL PICK THEM UP."

“OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM WILL COUNT THE BALLOTS WHILE WE GO INTO THE OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.” (YOU MAY ASK THAT SOME MEMBERS HELP IN COUNTING OF THE BALLOTS)

7:17 OFFICER REPORTS

PRESIDENT: “NOW _______ WILL GIVE THE TREASURER’S REPORT.”

PRESIDENT: “NOW I WILL GIVE MY REPORT”. (GIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS LIST HERE).

(YOU MAY CHOOSE FOR ANOTHER BOARD MEMBER TO GIVE THE GOALS LIST FOR NEXT YEAR OR GIVE IT HERE ALONG WITH THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS LIST.)

PRESIDENT OR OTHER BOARD MEMBER: PRESENT APPRECIATION GIFT TO APPROPRIATE PERSON(S) HERE.
7:30 GENERAL DISCUSSION

PRESIDENT: "IS THERE ANY UNFINISHED BUSINESS ANYONE WOULD LIKE TO BRING UP AT THIS TIME? PLEASE REMEMBER THAT IF YOU HAVE A MAINTENANCE PROBLEM OR A CONCERN THAT AFFECTS ONLY YOUR TOWNHOME, PLEASE BRING THE MATTER UP AFTER THE MEETING WITH A BOARD MEMBER OR, PREFERABLY, CALL THE ASSISTANT MANAGER TOMORROW.

8:05 ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTION RESULTS

WELCOME NEW DIRECTOR(S), ASK NEW DIRECTOR(S) TO REMAIN FOR A FEW MINUTES AFTER ADJOURNMENT TO HAVE A BRIEF BOARD MEETING AND TO ELECT OFFICERS.

8:06 COMMUNITY MANAGER PRESENTS CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION TO EACH BOARD MEMBER AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS.

8:07 ADJOURNMENT

PRESIDENT: THANK ALL MEMBERS PRESENT FOR ATTENDING THE MEETING. ASK IF THERE IS ANY FURTHER BUSINESS.

PRESIDENT: "SINCE THERE IS NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE 2007 ANNUAL MEETING OF ________ HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION IS ADJOURNED."

ALTERNATIVELY, CALL UPON THE MEMBERS PRESENT FOR A MOTION TO ADJOURN. MOTION MUST BE SECONDED AND REQUIRES A MAJORITY VOTE.

IT'S OVER!

(Note: this script was developed based on the bylaws of a specific condominium association and laws of the State of Texas. Governing documents and laws differ by community and state.)
Sample Conduct of Meetings for Community Associations

RANKING OF MOTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOTION</th>
<th>INTERRUPT</th>
<th>REQUIRES SECOND</th>
<th>DEBATABLE</th>
<th>AMENDABLE</th>
<th>VOTE REQUIRED</th>
<th>RECONSIDER</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIVE PRIVILEGED MOTIONS</td>
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<td>Fix time to which to adjourn</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Adjourn</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question of privilege</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Call for Orders of the Day</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEVEN SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS</td>
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<td>Lay on the Table</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Previous Question</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Two-thirds</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limit or Extend Limits of Debate</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Two-thirds</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Postpone to a Certain Time</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Commit or Refer</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amend</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Postpone Indefinitely</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE MAIN MOTION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main Motion</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS</td>
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<td>Point of Order</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Appeal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Maj. or Tie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suspend the Rules</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Two-thirds</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ojection to Consideration</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2/3 negative</td>
<td>Neg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Division of a Question</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Consideration by Paragraph</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Division of Assembly</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motions re Voting/Nominations</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requests and Inquiries</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Request for a Privilege</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>RESTORATORY MOTIONS</td>
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<td>Take from the Table</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reconsider</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Rescind</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Two-thirds</td>
<td>Neg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amend previously Adopted Motion</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Two-thirds</td>
<td>Neg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discharge a Committee</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Two-thirds</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MOTIONS

Motions are listed in the order of their precedence. The highest ranking motion is at the top of the list and the lowest ranking motion, the main motion, is at the bottom of the list of ranking motions.

The Main Motion introduces business to the meeting.

A Subsidiary Motion assists the meeting in treating or disposing of the main motion and sometimes of other motions.

A Privileged Motion has to do with special matters of immediate and overriding importance which, without debate, should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else. It does not relate to pending business.

An Incidental Motion has no ranking. The motion being correct depends upon its necessity at the time it is introduced.

Sample Calendar
# Sample Annual Calendar

Submitted by Thomas L. Willis, AMS, PCAM, Vice President, Zalco Realty, Inc. and founder of Association Bridge, LLC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JAN</th>
<th>FEB</th>
<th>MAR</th>
<th>APR</th>
<th>MAY</th>
<th>JUN</th>
<th>JUL</th>
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<th>SEPT</th>
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<th>NOV</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. ADMINISTRATIVE – GENERAL</td>
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<td>Annual Calendar - Prepare next year calendar (see Budget)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Meeting - Verify Schedule/Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Meeting - Call for Nominations (60 days out)</td>
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<td>Annual Meeting - Pre-Meeting SOP</td>
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<td>Annual Meeting - Send Notice (30 days out)</td>
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<td>Annual Meeting - Collect Officer &amp; Committee Reports</td>
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<td>Annual Meeting - Meet the Candidates Night</td>
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<td>Annual Meeting – Hold</td>
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<td>Annual Meeting - Post Meeting SOP</td>
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<td>Annual Preventive Maintenance Checklist</td>
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<td>Audit - Prepare box for auditors</td>
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<td>Audit - Send to Auditors (30 days after close of FY)</td>
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<td>Audit - Certification Letter sent to Board</td>
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<td>Audit - Final Draft Received and sent to Board</td>
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<td>Budget - Solicit comments (BOD, Committee, Staff)</td>
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<td>JAN</td>
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<td><strong>Budget - Prepare first draft</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Budget - Draft to Committee</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Budget - Committee meetings</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Budget - Draft to BOD</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Budget - Adoption</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Budget- Copy and Mail Summary Only(Do Not Mail General Fee Schedule to All Owners)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Budget - Copy to accounting dept, verify fees</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Budget - Prepare next year budget spread</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Coupons- Order</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community Info Sheet - Review &amp; Update</strong></td>
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<td><strong>File Purge/Archive</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Fireman Access Box - Update Resident With Special Nds List</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inventory - Maintenance Supplies &amp; Parts</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Newsletter - Print and distribute</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personnel - Staff Reviews</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Personnel - Staff Salary Increases</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personnel - Site Manager Review</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Personnel - Site Manager Salary Increase</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Property Inspections - Full (Building Manager)</strong></td>
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**II. ADMINISTRATIVE - CONTACT**

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### IV. PREVENTIVE / SCHEDULED MAINTENANCE (continued)

- Preventive Maintenance Inspections all Units
- Snow Removal - Order Supplies
- Strip drains - Inspect & clean
- Tennis Courts - Power Wash
- Trash chute wash down
- Trash Compactor - inspect including safety features
- Trash Compactor - annual equipment clean-up
- Unit Safety Inspections/Smoke Detector Battery Replacement
- Winterization - Valve off hose bibs
- Winterization - Fountain
- Commissioning - Fountain
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<td>Roof Replacements - Perform Project</td>
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## Providence Annual Calendar

### January
- **REVIEWS PREPARED**
  - 7 - BOD Mtg 10:00
  - 8 - Post apvd financials on website
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit
  - 28 - Hearings 1:00
- 15 - NAS Contract Audit Prep

### February
- **REVIEWS COMPLETED TO DZ**
  - 1 - Insurance Renews
  - News Prep
  - 12 - Get Acquainted Social
  - 25 - Hearings 1:00
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit

### March
- 4 - Major League Baseball 5:45 pm
- 21 - Gardening 101 10:00
- March Newsletter mailed
  - 25 - Hearings 1:00
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit

### April
- 4 - Chalk off
- 8 - BOD Mtg 10:00
- News Prep
  - 10 - Post apvd financials on website
  - 9 - Get Acquainted Social
  - 18 - Mark Twain Day 11:00
  - 22 - Hearings 1:00
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit
  - 24 - Drive By Breakfast

### May
- 11 - CCMC Contract Renewal
  - 2 - Gardening 101 10:00
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit
  - 27 - Summer Splash 7:00
  - 24 - Hearings 1:00

### June
- 11 - Get Acquainted Social
  - 27 - Summer Splash 7:00
  - 24 - Hearings 1:00
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit
  - 5 - Summer Fever - 50's dance 6:00

### July
- 8 - BOD Mtg
- 14 - Start 2009 Budget
- 11 - Gardening 101
- 25 - Summer Splash 7:00
- July Newsletter mailed
  - 10 - Post apvd financials
  - 22 - Hearings 1:00
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit

### August
- 4 - 1st Budget Draft
- News Prep
  - 4 - National Night Out
  - 29 - Summer Splash 7:00
  - 25 - Hearings 10:00
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit

### September
- 3 - Final Budget Draft
- 5 - 2009 Budget to DZ
- 22 - Prep Budget for BOD
- 26 - Kids Activity Fair
- 16 - Drive By Breakfast
- 23 - Hearings 1:00
- September Newsletter mailed
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit
  - 5 - Chalk off

### October
- News Prep
  - 28 - Hearings 1:00
  - 8 - BOD Mtg - Adopt 2009 Budget
  - 10 - Prep Budget Mailer
  - 24 - Mail Annual Meeting Notices
  - 8 - Get Acquainted Social
  - 17 - Red Apple Days
  - 30 - Trick or Treating
  - 10 - Post apvd financials on website
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit

### November
- 16 - Annual Mtg/Budget Ratification
- Year End Newsletter mailed
  - 25 - Hearings 1:00
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit

### December
- Year end reports
  - News Prep for Jan 2009
  - 10 - Hometown Holidays and Social 6:30
  - 11 - XO Svc Contract (ex2010)
  - 19 - Ofc Lease (ex2012)
  - 15 - Assessor Lot Audit
  - 25 - Hearings 10:00
Woodlake Community Association, Inc.
Long Range Plan
2007-2012
Mission Statement

The Woodlake Community Association is dedicated to preserving the Swift Creek Reservoir and to improving the quality of life of residents and to preserving and enhancing property values within the community. To accomplish this mission, the Woodlake Community Association Board of Directors adopts the following goals and objectives in order to guide planning for the community into the 21st century.

**Goal #1**
Continue to uphold and enforce the Covenants and high architectural standards in a reactive manner, soliciting the active participation and cooperation of owners in its efforts to maintain and enhance the value of property and quality of life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Improve communication of Community Standards Program. | • Educate residents on code violations and the reporting process to encourage participation in the reactive covenant enforcement process. Education through newsletter articles, information sessions, presence at special events, etc. | Minimize problem properties in the neighborhood | • How many newsletter articles?  
• How many information sessions were held?  
• How many special events were staffed by volunteers/staff members?  
• Were letters sent advertising the PDF package? How many? | Staff | 2007 |
| **Eliminate all barren parkway property.** | **Obtain professional study to determine the cost of irrigating and adding landscape/hardscape/light scape to non-lot fronting roads.** Determine issues related to irrigating and landscaping such as VDOT right-of-way. | **Determine feasibility of project.** | **Are the barren areas diminishing?**  
 Did we implement the study? | **BOD CM** | **2007 (study)  
 2007 – 12 (phasing)** |
<p>| ****Priority (Money) | <strong>Identify phasing opportunities for segmented cost.</strong> | <strong>Determine areas to be irrigated, mulched, planted.</strong> |  |  |  |
|  | <strong>Pick from segments irrigating/other techniques and bid out, then implement the project.</strong> |  |  |  |  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct annual community clean-ups with a competition for a prize.</td>
<td>Improve resident satisfaction levels.</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize volunteer organizations to focus on cleanup projects for public spaces (hourly requirements for schools, scouts, churches, etc.)</td>
<td>Increase community volunteerism</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist in the creation of a neighbor-to-neighbor program that helps connect residents to resources.</td>
<td>Residents take responsibility for the appearance of Woodlake.</td>
<td>2007-08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate, identify and expand programs to improve Woodlake’s appearance.</td>
<td>Improve the appearance of private property and common property.</td>
<td>Staff - ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the feasibility of a leaf vacuum service.</td>
<td>Recognize adopt-a-trail participants and other volunteers.</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use marketing plan and existing programs to create sense of community pride</td>
<td>How many volunteer projects take place?</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Who does projects?</td>
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<td>Did we help create a program?</td>
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<td>How many programs have we created to improve the neighborhoods appearance?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Would residents be willing to pay additional assessments for a leaf vacuum service?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are these strategies making a difference?</td>
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<td>Do we have fewer violations, complaints and higher resident satisfaction? Do we need to consider proactive enforcement?</td>
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Goal #2
Seek ways to maintain a high visibility of our community in the competitive marketplace.

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<tr>
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<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Revitalize the community gateways to create a recognizable identity and draw visitors into the community. | • Enhance rear entrance to create a visual entryway equal to the competition on Woolridge Road utilizing a water feature to bring the "lake" to the back of the community. Work with the commercial property owners (at rear entrance) to explore partnering on landscaping/water feature.  
• Maintain current quality of front entrance landscaping.  
• Utilize the services of a landscape architect to create a cohesive entrance design and determine phasing opportunities.  
• As part of the landscape plan, explore connections to the entrances, cost of extending bike trail to Hull Street, etc. | Determine feasibility and phasing by conducting a cost/benefit evaluation. | Did we do a study/get a plan?  
Conduct survey of new residents to evaluate the aesthetic appeal, draw to the neighborhood, etc.  
Develop and conduct a survey of realtors to find out the neighborhood’s appeal. (i.e. curb appeal from main entrances?) | Community Manager  
Board of Directors  
Staff | 2007 – 2008  
Obtain study/plan  
Evaluate phasing opportunities for 2008 – 12. |
Gain positive media attention to Woodlake for the quality of the neighborhood appearance, programs and services. **Priority (Time)**

- Hire a PR consultant to create a marketing plan to showcase Woodlake.
- Evaluate amenities and positive qualities of Woodlake and promote them by creating a full marketing package.
- Educate realtors and relocation offices of area companies and big businesses with the marketing packages to gain visibility and bring new residents to the community.
- Focus on Woodlake Goes Green – becoming more environmentally responsible and protecting the reservoir.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A comprehensive marketing package is created.</td>
<td>Are we recognized on the “lists” in local publications (Richmond Magazine, Style Weekly, Richmond Times Dispatch.)?</td>
<td>BOD and Staff</td>
<td>4th Qtr 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop long lasting relationships with realtors.</td>
<td>Double the number of relationships with realtors.</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The committee organizes events, obtains grants and funding, uses the website and newsletter to engage residents and develops a plan for retrofitting existing facilities and documents.</td>
<td>How many events? Did we obtain funding? Publicity? What facilities did we retrofit? Is the newsletter sent electronically?</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>2008 - 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive action that puts Woodlake on the map.</td>
<td>Is it available?</td>
<td>Staff/consultant</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>Great service/advantage for residents.</td>
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</table>

- Implement WI-FI community at Pavilion.
Goal #3

Maintain active communication with residents and owners through such channels as the newsletter, marquees, web site, neighborhood representative program and other means.

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<tr>
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<th>Time Frame</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create an easy to use website that serves as an information resource and usable tool and increase visitors to the website by 50%</td>
<td>• Revise the website. 1. Include forms and applications (ARB, etc.) that can be used easily by residents and staff. 2. Improve access to links and identify links of importance to residents. 3. Add realtor and classified listings as a paid service, but created via form on the website to eliminate staff time. • Conduct a Beta Test of website prior to active rollout. • Advertise new website in newsletter, on marquees, via banner, etc.</td>
<td>Flexibility to serve all residents through electronic and paper means Residents can gain access to information at all times, creating more flexibility without additional office hours. Simplified website with a limited scope. Enhance the way that residents do business with the WCA Ensure the website works. Get the word out.</td>
<td>How many hits per page on the website? Tracking stats: Where do people come from? Where do they go when they leave? What pages do they go to when they leave? Can staff update the site easily? How many electronic forms are submitted and how many papers? Resident satisfaction survey to evaluate resident happiness with site, access, ease of use, etc. How many fewer e-mails do we get about the site (start measuring before site update)? Usage of classifieds/realtor listings. Eliminate any problems with site. Increased usage of site.</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>2007 – 2008</td>
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</table>

**Priority (Time)**
| Expand and increase information available to residents through technology and other tools. | Website collection of e-mail addresses through an opt-in feature, creating different levels for an e-mail blitz. (Emergency/security only or community info, etc.) | Ability to reach residents in emergency situations. |
| | Use marquee at boathouse to announce information | Provide another resource of current information. |
| | Staff (volunteer or paid) a table at community events. | More informed residents. |
| | Create a more attractive annual meeting event (more fun, less business and a family event utilizing the pavilion). | More resident participation |

| Number of e-mails collected. | Rotate content every two weeks or less (Have we done that?) | Staff/website |
| Number of brochures distributed from Boathouse? | How many brochures distributed. | Staff/committee? |
| Traffic at event table? | Number of participants? | Gradual 2007, new venue 2008 |

© Community Associations Institute (CAI)
Goal #4
Continue to maintain the high quality of existing community amenities and an active program of community functions and activities that create a sense of "community".

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<th>Objective</th>
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<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
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</table>
| Maintain existing community amenities. | • Finish causeway improvements and give bridge a facelift.  
• Revitalize the landscaping of all neighborhood entrances.  
• Obtain cost estimates for refurbishing signs by stone refacing or other changing of brick and determining options for color changes to top of sign.  
• Refurbish tot lots and basketball courts  
• Continue and maintain the current status of improvements to Harbour Park.  
• Incorporate Go Green campaign by making it more of a “green site.”  
• Establish subcommittee to determine a long term plan for Harbour Park. | Pavilion revitalization is complete.  
Neighborhood entrance landscaping overhauls are on a routine schedule.  
Consistent updating of beds maintains competitiveness with newer neighborhoods.  
Meet safety standards for playgrounds.  
Increased usage of tot lots/bball courts.  
Happier residents | Review checklist from Pavilion project.  
Are entrance beds getting refurbished?  
How many per year? (Do we need to increase, decrease, etc?)  
Do we change the signs or not?  
Do we meet the safety guidelines in playgrounds? | Staff | 2007 (Spring)  
2007-2012  
2008  
2007-2009 |
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Maintain an active program of community functions</strong></th>
<th><strong>Priority (Time)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Maintain success of current improvements.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Maintain current lack of complaints and lower levels of vandalism.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Staff</strong></th>
<th><strong>2007-08</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Create new bike trails to existing amenities and enhance existing trails (waterfront trail widening)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Implement the plan.</strong></td>
<td><strong>What did we change?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identify projects and costs, then create a timeframe.</strong></td>
<td><strong>BOD/staff</strong></td>
<td><strong>2008-2012</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate feasibility of SRC/AFC purchase and potential for cost/phasing.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Did we improve trail access?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How would we purchase?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Widen waterfront path</strong></td>
<td><strong>BOD/Staff (consultant)</strong></td>
<td><strong>2010</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Maintain existing amenity.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Is it feasible?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Community response and participation levels.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Plan in advance for potential purchase.</strong></td>
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**Goal #5**

Keep abreast of county events, issues, and plans that may directly impact Woodlake and represent the best interests of the neighborhood in the public arena, while informing and encouraging resident participation.

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<th>Time Frame</th>
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</table>
| Actively advocate the interests of Woodlake residents through the development of long lasting and strong relationships with County and State officials. | • Continue annual and biannual meetings with the County emphasizing our interests in water quality, schools, transportation.  
• Begin meetings with state officials.  
• Develop collaboration with area communities on common issues (schools, transportation, water).  
• Review agendas of County meetings and maintain active attendance at County meetings (BOS, PC, other special interest).  
• Maintain contact with County Departments (department heads and other levels).  
• Explore other options such as a lobbyist or other dedicated resource.  
• Identify issues important to elected leaders.  
• Gather demographic and psychographic (behavior) information/statistics about Woodlake and match those statistics with issues important to various leaders. | Show a unified front as a politically active community  
More connectivity and relationships with officials.  
Unified front of communities.  
More active in issues related to Woodlake.  
Become proactive in keeping abreast of issues.  
Provide both positive and negative feedback to officials. Connect more with leaders on a personal level and on issues that are meaningful to them. Officials are involved with and support the Go Green initiative. | Is it done?  
Number of cases we’ve provided input on, plus the outcome of cases.  
Are we participating in the process?  
What is our influence on decisions?  
How many times do we approach our leaders with the positive?  
Are we really connecting with our leaders? | Community Manager/Board of Directors/Staff | 2007 (ongoing) |
Sample Minutes

Peaceful Community Association
Board of Directors Meeting
March 2, 200X

The regular monthly meeting of the board of directors of Peaceful Community Association was called to order at 7:06 p.m. at the Boxwood Recreation Center, Tuesday, March 2, 2009, by the president, Mr. Matthew Dunford. The secretary was present.

A quorum was present with the following directors in attendance: Mr. Matthew Dunford, Ms. Alicia Smith, Ms. Mary Falvo, Ms. Hailey Applegate, Ms. Elizabeth McNeil and Mr. Cal Robinson. Association manager, Dylan Bush, also was present.

The following director was absent: Mrs. Hannah Tyler.

The minutes of the February 1, 2009 meeting (attached) were approved as written.

The treasurer, Caleb Robinson, discussed the financial report (attached) and responded to questions.

The association manager, Dylan Bush, answered questions regarding the management report (attached) and added to his report the fact that the maintenance building had been broken into, that equipment had been stolen, and that a police report and insurance claim had been filed.

The maintenance committee report was received (attached) and the committee was thanked for its efforts to present a proposal for painting the Boxwood Recreation Center.

Hailey Applegate moved to approve the maintenance committee’s recommendation (attached) to contract Professional Paint Company to paint the Boxwood Recreation Center at a cost of $5,200.00. Motion adopted.

The architectural review committee report was received (attached) and the committee was commended for its work.

It was noted that the recreation committee had not met and there was no report.
The newsletter committee submitted a request for purchase of a desktop publishing program. Hailey Applegate moved to expend $226.00 for the purchase of a Microsoft Publisher program for use by the newsletter committee. Motion adopted.

Mary Falvo moved to approve the recreation committee’s proposal to improve the playground (attached).

After discussion, Hailey Applegate moved to postpone action on the motion until the next board meeting in order to allow time for the committee to provide additional information. Motion adopted.

There being no other business, a motion was made, seconded, and approved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

_______________________________  _______________________
Mrs. Elizabeth Neill, Secretary  Mr. Matthew Dunford, President

Date: __________________________  Date: ___________________
Sample - Election Agenda

(year) ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
(name of Association)
(day of week, date, time)
(location)

1. Call to Order
2. Call for Proxies to be submitted
3. Determination of Quorum
4. Proof of notice
5. Approval of Minutes of last Annual Meeting (unless approved by a committee following the previous annual meeting)
6. Call for Nominations from floor
7. Candidates Forum
8. Voting for Election of Board Members
9. Officer/Management Reports
10. Old Business
11. New Business
12. Announcement of Election Results
Sample - How to Hold an Annual Election

A Guide for Small and Self-Managed Community Associations

One of the most important legal duties that common ownership communities have is to hold elections of members of their boards of directors. This should be done every year, or as required by your legal documents.

The board of directors itself is a crucial part of the association. Happyland law and the association's own governing documents, which are legally binding, place most of the responsibility for the day-to-day operations and management of the association on the board, and give the board the right to make many important decisions, including but not limited to the establishment of the budget, the setting of the annual assessments, and the right to make many rules governing the common areas.

Although annual elections are important many boards are not familiar with the process and are not sure of how to call and hold elections properly. This is especially true when the association does not employ a professional community manager to advise them.
Sample – Rescheduled Annual Meeting Notice

The regular scheduled Annual Meeting of the (name, originally set for (date), has been rescheduled due to the lack of a quorum. The new date for the Annual Meeting will be: (day of week, date, time) (location)

This second meeting will take place pursuant to the original Annual Meeting Notice and as authorized by (for condominiums: Section XX of ABC Condominium Act) (for HOAs: Section X-XX of the ABC Corporations and Associations Act). At the rescheduled meeting, the quorum will consist of the members present in person and by proxy, even if that number is less than the number stated in our governing documents, per Article II, Section 5.2(b) of the Bylaws of the (name of Association).

The main order of business will be the election of new board members.

If you are unable to attend, you may use the attached Directed Proxy.

There will be (#) positions available on the Board of Directors.

In addition to those who are listed on the attached Proxy, nominations for other candidates may be made from the floor.

We look forward to seeing you.

_____________________________
Board President
Sample – Notice of Annual Meeting and Elections

(Name of Association)

The (name of association) will hold its Annual Meeting and Election of Directors on (day of week, date and time) (location)

The purpose of this meeting will be to elect members of the Board of Directors and to conduct any other business that may come before the members.

Statements of the candidates are attached. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor at the meeting before the election begins.

Each qualified member may cast as many votes as are authorized by the Declaration and Bylaws for the member's unit or lot. Members can be disqualified from voting as provided by the Declaration and Bylaws if they are not current in their assessments.

If you cannot attend, you may vote by proxy. The approved Directed Proxy is also enclosed. In order for you to use a Proxy to vote for a candidate, you must specify the name of the candidate. You can check off the name of the candidate if listed on the Proxy or write in the names of the candidates of your choice. (However, for a ballot to be used for a write-in candidate that person must be nominated from the floor at the election.) You may also submit your Proxy for quorum purposes only with no voting authority.

You may vote only once for each candidate.

Because (#) positions on the board are available, you should vote only for (#) candidates. (If you vote for more than that your Proxy will be disqualified and not counted.)

You must give this Directed P to a proxy holder of your choice to carry to the meeting or you must give it to (name, address) no later than (deadline).

For homeowner associations-- use this paragraph:
If there are not enough members at the meeting in person or by proxy to establish a quorum, then pursuant to Section 5-206 of the Maryland Corporations and Associations Article, a second meeting may be called and at least 15 days notice will be given. At the second meeting, the lot owners present in person and by proxy will constitute a quorum. Unless the Bylaws state otherwise, a majority of the lot owners present in person or by proxy at the second meeting may approve or authorize the proposed actions and may take any other action that could have been taken at the original meeting if there had been a quorum at that meeting.
Sample – Notice of Annual Meeting and Elections

*For condominium association---use this paragraph:

If there are not enough members at the meeting in person or by proxy to establish a quorum, then pursuant to Section 11-109 of the Maryland Condominium Act, a second meeting may be called if a majority of those present in person and by proxy so agree. At least 15 days notice of the additional meeting will be given. At the second meeting, the unit owners present in person and by proxy will constitute a quorum. The owners present in person or by proxy at the second meeting may approve or take any action that could have been taken at the first meeting if there had been a quorum.

We urge all members to attend this important meeting or to submit their Directed Proxies.

_______________________________
Board President
Sample - Application For Board of Directors (Name of Association)

This Application must be returned by (date) to be valid.

Name: ________________________________
Address: ________________________________
Telephone: ________________________________
Email: ________________________________

I wish to submit my application to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. I have reviewed the qualifications for a director's position as set out in the governing Documents. I am qualified and willing to serve as a member of the Board.

I have also reviewed the responsibilities of the Board of Directors. I wish to share with the members the reasons that I am qualified to serve and my goals for this community:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Signed

Return this form by (date) to (name, address). Thank you!
Sample - Checklist

Annual Meeting Documents for Members
Meeting: Date

☐ Notice of Annual Meeting-To be printed on letterhead

☐ Attachment 1-Agenda

☐ Attachment 2-Standing Rules

☐ Attachment 3-Notice of Nomination (includes resumes)

☐ Attachment 4-Sample Ballot

☐ Attachment 5-Proxy

☐ 20XX Annual Meeting Minutes for Approval
Sample – Inspector of Elections

Inspector(s) of Election Instructions

The Association Board of Directors shall select one or more Inspector(s) of Election. The Inspectors may be Members, as long as such Member is not running for an elective office that is being contested in the election. The number of Inspectors of Election shall be one or three as determined in the discretion of the Board of Directors and shall perform the following duties:

1. Perform any acts as may be proper to conduct the election with fairness to all members. An Inspector of Election shall perform his or her duties impartially, in good faith, to the best of his or her ability, and as expeditiously as is practical. If there are three Inspectors of Election, the decision or act of a majority shall be effective in all respects as the decision or act of all. Any report made by the Inspector(s) of Election is prima facie evidence of the facts stated in the report.

2. Determine the number of Members entitled to vote and the voting power of each Member.

3. Determine the authenticity and validity of proxies and ballots in accordance with the following:

   3.1 Proxy/ballot must be received by the close of the election to be counted.
   3.2 For the board positions, no more than three (3) boxes maybe checked OR write-in’s up to three (3) different names.
   3.3 If more than three (3) candidates are marked on the proxy or ballot, those votes will be ignored, but the proxy or ballot will count towards a determination of whether or not a quorum is present at the meeting.
   3.4 Cumulative voting is not allowed.
   3.5 A proxy must be signed by the owner and dated. Signed means the placing of the member’s name on the proxy (whether by manual signature, typewriting, telegraphic transmission, electronic, or otherwise) by the Member or authorized representative of the Member.
   3.6 Proxies may be submitted electronically provided that the proxy meets the requirements of this Section 3.
   3.7 Electronic ballots must contain the electronic signature of the Member.
   3.8 If a household that is entitled to only one vote submits more than one ballot, neither ballot shall be counted.

4. All votes shall be counted and tabulated by the Inspector(s) of Election or his, her or their designee in public at a properly noticed open meeting of the Board of Directors or the Annual Meeting of Members. Any candidate or other Member of the Association may witness the counting and tabulation of the votes.

5. Once a ballot is received by the Inspector it is considered irrevocable.

6. The tabulated results of the election shall be promptly reported to the President at the Annual Meeting or, if the meeting is continued or is a special meeting, to the Board of Directors of the Association and shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The results shall be available for review by Members of the Association in accordance with state law. The results shall be promptly posted on the Association’s website.

7. The Inspectors of Election shall hear and determine all challenges and questions in any way arising out of or in connection with the right to vote or any ballots or proxies cast in the election.
Sample – Revocable Directed Proxy/Ballot

(Name of Association)
(Year) Annual Meeting

Name: ........................................................................................................

Address:

Designated proxy:
(Owner Name)

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Unless you complete the enclosed ballot, this proxy will be used only for the purpose of obtaining a quorum at the Annual Meeting to be held on DATE, at TIME or at a rescheduled meeting should a quorum not be obtained at that time.

Make sure your designated proxy holder brings this form to the meeting.

PROXY INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting, please complete this proxy in full and have all owners of your (unit/lot) sign where indicated.

2. If you wish to cast your vote, please complete the enclosed ballot voting for no more than # persons.

3. Your Association fee account must be current in order to vote.

4. The ballot should be placed inside a sealed envelope with the proxy attached to the outside of the envelope.
ASSOCIATION NAME
(YEAR) Annual Meeting
OFFICIAL BALLOT

There are # positions open on the Board of Directors. Please cast no more than # votes below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>VOTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate 1</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate 2</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write-In</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write-In</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Books / Videos**

2013 Community Association Manager Compensation & Salary Survey, by the Foundation for Community Association Research

The A-B-C's of Parliamentary Procedure

The Board Secretary: Roles and Responsibilities in Community Associations, by Anita Hagerty Schenk, PCAM and P. Michael Nagle, ESQ.

Community Association Leadership: A Guide for Volunteers, by Anne M. Calmes

Community Association Leadership Series — DVD

Community First! Emerging Visions Reshaping Americas Condominium and Homeowner Associations, by Bill Overton, PCAM


Conflict Resolution: How ADR Helps Community Associations, by Mary Avgerinos

Decision Making in Communities: Why Groups of Smart People Sometimes Make Bad Decisions, by Jasmine Martirossian


The Homeowners Association Manual, by Peter M. Dunbar

Homeowners Associations: A How To Guide for Leadership and Effective Participation, by John Paul Hanna & Grace Morioca


**Websites / Organizations**

The American Institute of Parliamentarians, P.O. Box 2173, Wilmington, DE 19899, (888) 664-0428, www.parliamentaryprocedure.org

Community Associations Institute, 6402 Arlington Blvd., Suite 500, Falls Church, VA 22042, (888) CAI-4321, www.caionline.org


The National Association of Parliamentarians, 213 South Main Street, Independence, MO 64050, (888) NAP-2929, www.parliamentarians.org
Thank you for participating in Community Leadership (M-203). We hope that you have enjoyed the learning experience. CAI also offers the following Professional Management Development Program (PMDP) courses that provide community association managers the necessary information about insurance, law, leadership, governance, and finance to help their clients create and maintain strong and vibrant communities.

M-100: The Essentials of Community Association Management  
M-201: Facilities Management  
M-202: Association Communications  
M-203: Community Leadership  
M-204: Community Governance  
M-205: Risk Management  
M-206: Financial Management  
M-300: Ethics and the Community Manager  
M-310: Management Company Administration  
M-320: Advanced Physical Maintenance  
M-330: Advanced Insurance and Risk Management  
M-340: Managing the Large-Scale Association  
M-350: Manager and the Law  
M-360: Leadership Practices in Building Community  
M-370: Managing Developing Communities  
M-380: Litigation Training for Managers  
M-400: Contemporary Issues in Community Association Management  
PCAM Case Study

For more information about any of these classes, or to obtain more information about the CMCA® (Certified Manager of Community Associations®), AMS® (Association Management Specialist®), LSM® (Large-Scale Manager®), RS™ (Reserve Specialist™), CIRMS™ (Community Insurance and Risk Management Specialist™), AAMC™ (Accredited Association Management Company™), or PCAM® (Professional Community Association Manager®) designations, please call 888-CAI-4321 or visit www.caionline.org.