



Board Service Guide

by Richard Thompson

Serving on the board of a homeowner association is a high calling. Well-meaning volunteers are elected to roles that are critical to the well-being of the community. But what exactly is a board member supposed to do to fulfill this charge? Here's a handy guide:

Officer Responsibilities

President:

- Prepares meeting agenda
- Presides at all board and owner meetings
- Appoints and supervises all committees
- Supervises the manager
- Trains directors for future leadership positions
- Sets a positive example

Vice President:

- Keep current on HOA business
- Be prepared to fill in for president (Only a "heartbeat" away)
- In training for future presidency

Secretary:

- Records minutes at all meetings
- Maintains book of minutes and resolutions
- Posts meeting notices
- Attests to the authenticity of corporate documents
- Certifies all meeting notices and election results
- Responsible for all official communications with members
- Timekeeper for all meetings

Treasurer:

- Responsible for collection and expenditure of assessments

- Reviews and summarizes financial statements
- Approves/signs all checks
- Monitors reserve investments
- Monitors delinquencies

All Board Members:

- Come to meetings prepared
- Maintain a professional demeanor
- Put personal agendas aside
- Encourage participation
- Be open and fair
- Maintain confidentiality when appropriate

Board meetings are designed to transact HOA business. All members should be welcome to attend and observe. To that end, provide a Member Forum at the beginning of the meeting for owner comments, questions, and complaints (It's the American way).

- Motions & Voting—Business matters are considered when a motion is made, and seconded. Each motion should offer the opportunity for discussion prior to a vote. Votes, when taken, involve board members only.
- Meeting Agenda—There may be an agenda format prescribed in your governing documents. If so, use it. If not, use an agenda like:

- I. Call to Order—President says, "The meeting is called to order."
 - II. Minutes—Secretary reads the Minutes of the last meeting.
 - III. Officer's Reports—Usually a report from the treasurer, but others may report at this time.
 - IV. Committee Reports—First come reports from "standing" or permanent committees; then from "ad hoc," or special committees.
 - V. Unfinished Business—Business left over from previous meetings.
 - VI. New Business—Introduction of new topics.
 - VII. Adjournment—The meeting ends by a vote or by general consent.
- Timed Agenda—To keep meetings on track, using a timed agenda is helpful. Two hours or less should be the goal of most meetings since concentration and productivity begins to fade. So, when composing the agenda, put actual time limits on each item, like Owner Forum (15 minutes), Minutes (5 minutes), Treasurer's Report (10 minutes), and so on. Timing will help move business along

and remind all present that time is a valuable commodity.

- Action Agenda—Meetings should be action driven. To that end, all agenda items should be framed with a "review and approve" context to them. While discussion may be part of the plan, it is not the goal. Every item brought up at the meeting should have a motion and second. So, if a director states, "I'd like to talk about a parking policy on commercial vehicles," the president's response should be, "Do I hear a motion and second to establish a commercial vehicle parking policy?" If both aren't forthcoming, time to move on to other business. Impromptu motions should usually be handled at a future meeting if they require research and study. The president should ask the proposer to present a proposal at the next meeting for the board's consideration.

All members have the responsibility to serve the HOA in some way, whether it be on the board or a committee. If you've recently been elected, congratulations! Welcome to the board and thanks for stepping up! ■

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