

THE COMMUNITY BUILDER

Welcoming New Board Members

This morning I was particularly reminded how important the introduction of the business of your association is to new board members as we are holding Board Certification classes today - three sessions full. Florida requires new board members to either take a Board Certification class that introduces them to the responsibilities of a board, a review of laws that apply, and provide a general overview of conducting a board meeting successfully to obtain a Certificate of Completion or to sign an affidavit that becomes part of the official books and records, that newly elected directors has read and understand the documents of their community and the laws of the state of Florida as it pertains to associations. But whether your state statutes require it or not, there should be some way to welcome a new board member to the recent past history of your Association. This is also particularly timely, as most communities will be having or have recently had annual meetings at which new board members were elected. It may even have been a complete turnover with a whole new board.

What do you do to introduce your new board members to the business of the association? I've sat in board meetings with new members or full new boards and it's almost like starting over. It makes sense to provide some kind of historical information so they are aware of at least the basic. The Board Room on CommunityPro Portal is the perfect repository for this information. You could ask your manager to have items posted in the Board Room by creating a new drawer for the information, making orientation to your new board members easier and more accessible to their schedule? If you haven't, you should know this is very much an option. This drawer would only be accessible to board members and would be a great place to put those documents that all board members should have access to, without having to have them printed out or allowing them to be printed at the new member's leisure.

With the inclusion or infusion of new blood to the board, it might also be a great opportunity to review those policies and procedures that were adopted to ensure that everyone is on board with the process and that they still comply with the most current statutes (if any) or with the times and conditions that exist in your community. Does your Collections Policy represent the best process for collecting past due assessments? Is there sufficient notification to those with covenants



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violations? Do you publish these policies on a routine basis to ensure the owners know what the processes are? It might be a good idea to include these items or this information when sending out the coupons for the coming year.

I sit on the Board of Directors in my own community and serve as the Vice President. When I was elected, I made an appointment with the management company to go in and obtain copies of the minutes of the past six months board meetings, copies of the most recent financial, review of the contracts with which our community was involved, copies of the policies and procedures for covenants enforcement, collections, the ARB guidelines and process, and anything else that would help me be a contributing member at my first meeting. It takes a while to get acclimated, but the association business doesn't wait, it moves on. Having or having access to information of this type is a plus when it comes to the integration of new team members into the fold.

The technology is at your fingertips to compile or provide the availability of this knowledge. Communication is always a good idea. While not everyone may welcome this knowledge, at the very least, the board has done their job in communicating what theirs is.

