

Hosting Successful Community Association Meetings

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Here are some suggestions to consider review here what makes a successful board meeting, annual meeting, and the difference between the two. Thanks to the CAI for giving a blueprint for property managers.

So, as with most communities, the requirements for your meetings are determined by state statutes and your governing documents. If you don't have a copy of your governing documents, get them! They outline your meeting frequency, whether you can hold open or closed meetings, the timing for sending meeting notices, and lastly, voting procedures for annual meetings.

As the CAI so deftly notes, the board meeting is the end of a decision-making process, not the beginning. The manager has a responsibility to prepare the board members with this goal in mind. Committee reports, budgets and minutes from the last meeting are just some of the items the manager needs to produce in the board meeting packet.

The Open Board Meeting

The Agenda: In addition to alerting people to the items, the agenda serves as a tool to keep the meeting on track, to specify the order of business and for the voting to take place.

Following basic parliamentary procedure is the most effective way to keep board meetings on track. Most community associations use Robert's Rules.

Do you have a **quorum?** It refers to the number of owner/members required to be present for the board to legally conduct the business of the association. If no quorum exists at a meeting, then no business can be voted on.

Approve previous meeting minutes – Easy enough.

Reports – If the president, the treasurer or any committees have reports to share, they present their reports. If it's an open meeting and members are present, make sure the presenters remind owners that they welcome feedback during the public comment section of the meeting.

Public Comment – This is where members make comments on or share ideas about the proposals (limit remarks to 2-3 minutes each). Keeping a formal format helps to keep your meeting on time and structured, especially if there are hot topics on the agenda. This format gives everyone a chance to speak but keeps the environment calm. Note that although owners have a right to express themselves, final decisions are voted by the board.

Motions – A board member makes a motion to vote on the agenda item, another seconds the motion, and a vote is taken. The majority of votes decides the issue and the decision is recorded in the minutes.

Motions can also be **debated**, or discussed prior to voting on an issue. But, in many cases, the committee or board members have already done this. As with all discussions, civility and staying “on topic,” is paramount.

Budget Ratification – At the right time of year, the budget should be ratified after presented by the treasurer or finance committee.

Adjourn Meeting

The Annual Meeting

An agenda and quorum are needed, but if the meeting is truly an annual meeting, then the goal of the meeting and the only motion put forward is the election of officers.

Board Elections – Candidates give some background on themselves, then the vote takes place, with ballots counted by pre-designated third parties.