

Board Games: New Rules for Successful Boards

By Judy Ziner, CPM, Vice President Operations

There is good news for Board Members. Taking care of business has become a little less restrictive under new rules. These changes can save time – the single biggest obstacle to recruiting and retaining homeowners to serve on a Board.

New Legislation allows Boards to convene privately for an expanded number of reasons. Both the Illinois Condominium Property Act and the Common Interest Community Association Act were amended to allow closed meetings to **discuss** the following:

1. Probable or pending litigation
2. Employment related issues
3. Violations of the Rules and Regulations
4. Delinquent Accounts
5. Third party contracts
6. Interview prospective employees and contractors
7. Consult with the Association's Legal Counsel

These closed session discussions do not require formal homeowner notice. However, all Board votes must be taken in a noticed, open meeting.

Recruiting owners to serve on Boards can be challenging. The most frequent concerns include the time commitment, late night meetings and lack of civility by homeowners or other Board members. New rules, if properly implemented, can alleviate or at least minimize those concerns. Serving on a Board of Directors for your Association or Corporation requires much of you, including property knowledge, decisiveness and the ability to work as a team. A thick skin can also come in handy when making tough decisions for the good of the community

Time commitment can be reduced by delegating responsibilities to management. Your Property Manager and

Regional Director are licensed professionals, with a robust team of support staff. Selectively utilize Committees or Commissions to do the research and leg work on special projects. Tap their expertise in an advisory capacity to assist the Board in prudent decision making.

Board meetings can be conducted in a manner that is less invasive into personal time. Many Boards are experiencing success by holding meetings at 8:00 AM, over the lunch hour or at 5:00 PM. A meeting can be hosted by the Property Manager in the usual meeting place and homeowners can observe by calling in by phone, video chatting or via skype. Board members can call in from their offices, vacation homes or travels.

Finally, take control of Board meetings. They are business meetings for the members of the Board. Homeowners may observe the business meetings, and may participate during the homeowner forum session. A well-run Board meeting should not exceed an hour and a half in length.

The issue of civility, or lack thereof, is getting a lot of press these days. Serving on a Board can place you in the firing line of disgruntled homeowners, vendors, employees and even other Board members. The Board President must take the lead and maintain control of Board meetings, enforcing rules and civility for all parties. If a situation escalates, bring in legal counsel to mitigate growing tensions. Prompt action by the Board will set the standard for behaviors going forward.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you. Working together we can accomplish great things.



For more information on the roles and responsibilities of being on a Board, watch the 2017 Board Boot Camp webinar on our blog at liebermanmanagement.com

Award-Winning Association Management

By Carla Young Kennedy, CEO



We are thrilled that Lieberman Management Services, Inc. (LMS) was honored with the 2017 Management Company of the Year Award. This award was presented by the Chicago Chapter of the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM) in March 2017.

The Management Company of the Year is one of the most coveted awards in the industry, fiercely contested among IREM Chicago Chapter No. 23's 700 members. Winners are those who show outstanding results in leadership, sustainability, operations, technology, marketing, industry involvement and community service.

This is the second time LMS has been recognized with this award from IREM. LMS has also won IREM's Technology and Design Award for our proprietary property management and communications software. Lieberman Management Services has been an Accredited Management Organization of IREM since 2005.

This honor is the culmination of a year of record growth, retention and award-winning property management. In the last year, LMS has also won the BBB 2017 Torch Award for Marketplace Ethics, which recognizes our exceptional culture of ethical business practices.

Mild Winters Bring Summer Problems

By Angela Duea, LMS Communications Specialist

The past few winters could not be described as typical Chicago weather – mild temperatures, no extensive period of sub-zero temperatures and less snowfall than normal. Add early spring weather and an extended period of rain, and we are set up for a summer of unusual pest and landscaping challenges.

A cold winter is one of nature's ways to balance insects and diseases by killing off the weaker ones. The warm winters killed off fewer insects and diseases than usual, so we can expect some robust insect and disease populations this year. Unfortunately, mosquitoes are expected to be significantly above normal this year as well. This spring and summer, landscapers will inspect the environment to determine whether insect or disease infestations are at a level of significant damage. They can prescribe a customized treatment plan for each community.

During a warm winter, despite best efforts, it is normal for the snowplow to create damage. When turf areas are frozen, plows can push back the snow from drives/walks into the turf areas. These areas are repaired by landscape teams as weather permits within the proper season.

Once snow recedes and grass and plants begin to grow, winter damage and landscape needs become apparent. We realize that you want your outdoor areas looking perfect as soon as possible, but please be aware that the landscapers and your Board of Directors work with a specific schedule for the optimum times to complete all outdoor work. We appreciate your patience, and hope you enjoy the lush foliage that a warm spring brings!

Fast Fact

Don't let potential owners be unpleasantly surprised by pet restrictions when they fall in love with your community. Try drafting a brief article about the restriction for local real estate agents. Often, real estate agents can publish such information in their listings database or in a newsletter.

If you have difficulty with pet regulations and current residents, check on local ordinances regarding leash laws and clean-up requirements. These are likely to be similar to those of community associations. Association rules may gain credibility with the owners if they are linked with local law.



2017 IREM Management Company of the Year

2017 BBB Torch Award for Marketplace Ethics



Pool Care and Safety

By Angela Duea, LMS Communications Specialist

If your community has a swimming pool, you may not know that its care and safety is subject to many regulations. A lot of work goes into keeping it clean, healthy, fun and safe; however, you can swim in your community pool knowing that various practices are in place to make sure your summer fun is trouble-free.

Pools must be licensed by the county and state, after an official does a health and safety inspection every other year. Then, before a pool is open to the public, the pool operator must inspect for possible damage on the pool's surface, coping and tile. The pool mechanical equipment and safety devices, such as pumps, heaters, fencing, land-line phone and rescue equipment also must be examined. This inspection may be done by a pool maintenance company or a Certified Pool Operator.

During the summer, a trained maintenance person will be responsible for making sure the water is clean and sanitary and that any physical problems are resolved quickly. If your community doesn't have lifeguards, a notice that the pool is not monitored is important to avoiding litigation to the Association if something goes wrong. Even when lifeguards are present, residents serve their community best by holding each other accountable for following the rules.

Pool passes and a check-in process ensures that only residents and their guests have access to the pool. LMS Property Managers work hard every spring to identify all those who are eligible to enjoy the pools. They can create and distribute pool passes to them. When giving out passes, they try to be available at designated times that are convenient to the majority of homeowners. However, Managers coordinate hundreds of residents across many properties and may need to make alternate arrangements with individuals.

Your community will derive a lot of pleasure from a pool facility, if it is run as a clean, healthy, safe and enjoyable amenity. The inspections, maintenance, management and oversight can be a lot of work, but it's worth it in the end. Be prepared for summer fun in the sun!



Fast Fact

Did you know that Property Managers must renew their licenses every other year through the State of Illinois? Illinois requires all Community Association Managers to have a Community Association Manager license through the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. All of LMS's Property Managers are licensed by the State of Illinois, and many of them also hold certifications from either the Community Association Institute or the Institute for Real Estate Management. These certifications and designations recognize that Community Managers have taken additional steps to increase their fundamental knowledge required to manage community Associations, and that they have pledged to uphold the state licensing code of ethics. We wouldn't want anything less for our valued residents!

A New Year, a New Look

By Angela Duea, LMS Communications Specialist

In the spirit of adding value to your community's communications, LMS offers 11 time-saving templates to freshen up your Association's newsletter. If your Communications Committee or Board Members would like to use these templates, your Property Manager can download the template for you to edit.

The templates are designed in Microsoft Word and can be easily modified for your specific needs. You, or your communications volunteer can easily edit text boxes, modify the added photos, or add art. Your updated look will catch your residents' attention and keep them engaged!



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Facebook Community Photo Contest Summer 2017

Snap a Pic, Get "Likes" and Win!

We love your community – and we know you're attached to it too. Lieberman Management Services wants to see what you love about your Association or Corporation. Beautiful landscaping, rooftop views, architectural details – we want to see it all!

LMS is running a Facebook photo contest June 30 – August 4 and we want you to participate. Simply grab a camera, take a creative picture, and send it to us. At the end of each week, we'll post all the photos we receive, and the one with the most Facebook "likes" wins a \$20 gift card. This means four opportunities to win! And at the end of the contest, the four winning photos will be judged on creativity, quality, and expressiveness by an LMS panel. They will choose who wins a \$200 cash prize, a special article written about the community, and prominent placement in future publications.

Our full contest rules are available online at LiebermanManagement.com/PhotoContest.



New Communities

We would like to welcome the following communities!



4 E. ELM STREET

Chicago



FIRESIDE TERRACE

Buffalo Grove



RANDOLPH PLACE

Chicago



1320 N. STATE STREET

Chicago



SALEM WALK

Northbrook



WEATHERSFIELD SOUTH

Schaumburg



SURFSIDE

Chicago



BLOOMINGDALE WALK

Bloomington



1200 LAKE SHORE DRIVE

Chicago



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