

# Across THE BOARD

**lms** lieberman management services

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**24-HOUR**

**EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

**312.202.9300**

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**PROPERTY QUOTE**

**NEEDED?**

**Contact us at**

**rfp@lmsnet.com**

**call us at the numbers**

**listed above**

**COMMENTS, QUESTIONS,  
SUGGESTIONS?**

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**ALL THE BOARDS ARE DOING IT!  
BEST PRACTICES AND GREAT IDEAS TO GET IT DONE.**

**By Judy Ziner, CPM, CAM, Vice President of Operations**

Spring has finally decided to make an appearance in Chicago. The days are longer, snowbirds have returned, taxes are filed and project season is underway. Board Members and Managers are working together to accomplish budgeted goals and other initiatives.

What best practices have successful Boards adopted to be more productive? We asked some of you, and the following responses were enlightening:

- ⇒ We run the Board meeting like a business meeting. Open forum is timed, and we adhere to the agenda and make decisions. Our meetings last about an hour.
- ⇒ We utilize Commissions with specific expertise to do much of the legwork and advise the Board.
- ⇒ We moved our meetings to 8 AM and get so much more accomplished.
- ⇒ We take advantage of the new rules allowing for closed meetings to discuss litigation, employee matters, violations, contracts and legal consultations. (Note: closed sessions do not require Homeowner notice, but all votes must be taken in a noticed, open meeting.)
- ⇒ We delegate routine and budgeted matters to our Property Manager – that’s why they are hired.
- ⇒ We insist on respect and civility by our Board Members and Homeowners.
- ⇒ We recognize good work by our Board Members and staff at every meeting.
- ⇒ We use technology and allow Board Members to call or Skype in to meetings. We have gone electronic with our monthly Board reports to save paper, expense and time.

Boards are willing to “mix things up” to become more efficient. Some have changed meeting times to morning, noontime or five p.m. to eliminate the late night meetings that so many members find conflict with other commitments. Designating a single point of contact, typically the Board President, for the Property Manager provides clear direction.

LMS works hard to keep Board Members informed and equipped to make the best decisions for their communities. Resources, training, Board bootcamps and orientations are published on our website and YouTube, and these resources are useful for new Board Members as well as a good refresher for seasoned veterans. Check them out if you haven’t already.

If you have questions or concerns, we can help. LMS has a team of experts available to assist your Association or Corporation. Best of luck this season and, as always, we appreciate your dedication and support.



## SEE SOMETHING? SAY SOMETHING!

You may have heard the quote, “If You See Something, Say Something.” This motto is part of an initiative by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that urges us all to be responsible for the safety of our communities. Similarly, your attention to unsafe conditions in your Association helps your Property Manager and maintenance services keep on top of issues that need to be fixed. Call or email LMS if you see:

- Tripping hazards such as torn carpeting, broken concrete or steps
- Things that may drop on passers-by such as dangling gutters or broken tree branches
- Burned-out lights in common areas
- Damaged fencing
- Broken locks in secured area
- Pets roaming around without their owners
- Suspicious activity in your community

In addition, it's important that all residents living in a Co-Op or Community Association are familiar with their declaration, rules and regulations, proprietary lease or occupancy agreement. These are legally binding rules and regulations that each homeowner agrees to when he or she purchases a unit within the Association. They play a crucial role in keeping the community running smoothly. Since your Property Manager cannot be everywhere within the community on a 24/7 basis, it is crucial that residents are familiar with the rules and report infractions for the good of the community. If you see criminal activity, though, the first call should be to the police. Rest assured that you can remain anonymous when reporting.

## FACEBOOK PHOTO CONTEST SUMMER 2018

### 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 July 30 – August 31 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 five 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.

## PLANNING FOR SUMMER FUN

One of the most popular amenities in a community is a pool – something you probably already know if you live in a community that maintains a pool. They are fun for all ages, but they do take a considerable amount of upkeep. This upkeep begins well before the pool gates ever open, with spring maintenance and inspections.

An inspection should ensure that pumps and filters are working properly, broken equipment is identified, the pool lining is sound and the pool deck does not have any cracks or hazards. Any issues should be addressed before the pool is cleaned and refilled.

Pools must be licensed by the county and state, after an official does a health and safety inspection every other year. The pool mechanical equipment and safety devices, such as pumps, heaters, fencing, land-line phone and rescue equipment also must be examined. A pool maintenance company or a Certified Pool Operator may do this inspection.

If there have been any safety concerns or other issues with operating the pool, the board of directors may think about revising pool rules or procedures before the season begins. These rules should be well communicated and posted near the pool.

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, so 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!



## SPRING WALKS

As the weather warms up and the snow melts, we all see the toll that winter has taken on properties. It's the time of year when Lieberman's Property Managers start their site walks through communities, often accompanied by a representative of the landscaping/snow removal company, or members of the Board. While it may be difficult to spot all problems just by looking at the buildings, we do our best to identify items that need further attention.

As a homeowner, you may wonder what LMS Property Managers are doing around the buildings – or how you can help. Here are some of the things we look for during spring property inspections, depending on the agreement with your Association.

**Landscaping:** We look for turf damage, diseased or dying shrubs and trees, and broken limbs that may injure someone. We identify tripping hazards and damage like lifted concrete, cracks, potholes, crumbling slabs, and areas with frequent standing water that may cause damage to the surfaces over time.

**Structures:** Where possible, we note damaged fences, balconies and decks, or loose or damaged siding or trim. On brick exteriors or trim, we may be able to see significant cracks and crumbling material that needs repair. We note common-area problems such as broken, cracked or rusting fixtures and doors that don't latch.

**Gutters and roofs:** While we don't climb up on roofs (and you probably shouldn't either!), from the ground we can see some signs of damage such as broken or missing shingles, gutters and downspouts.

Once the walk is completed, we discuss the findings with the Board, and come up with a plan to fix items according to the Association's budget. Please remember that spring maintenance doesn't happen overnight. It is important to have realistic expectations about how quickly the professionals can take care of months of hard weather and damage. Some initial signs of damage may require LMS to call in experts for more in-depth evaluations.

If you have noticed something that needs to be repaired, please call our Resident Services Department - someone else may not have reported it yet. As always, if you have questions about what work is covered by your Association dues, or how repairs are being handled, please check your Association's rules or attend your next Board meeting.

## KEEPING PETS WELCOME

Most people have a soft spot for pets, and many Associations and Co-ops pride themselves in being pet-friendly places. However, rules about pet ownership are necessary since pets do not govern themselves, and harmony is needed between pet owners and pet-free residents. The Board of Directors is responsible for making clear, enforceable rules and working with the management company to enforce the rules fairly and consistently.



### Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

Though all owners receive a copy of the rules and regulations when they move in, the pet regulations may not stay top of mind. Post signs in common areas about keeping pets on leash and picking up after them. Send out a memo periodically about the rules, or add an article a few times a year to your community's newsletter. This not only reminds everyone about the rules, but also keeps it in their minds when a neighbor sees someone breaking the rules.

### Make it Easy to Comply

"A pet waste station in heavily trafficked areas is a convenient way to provide residents with the tools they need to clean up waste," says Philip Barasch of Suburban Scoopers, a pet waste removal company in the northern suburbs. Pet waste stations are available in a wide variety of models and price ranges, but normally consist of a waste bag dispenser and a disposal bin. These stations fit easily in the corner of an urban dog run or on a common area lawn.

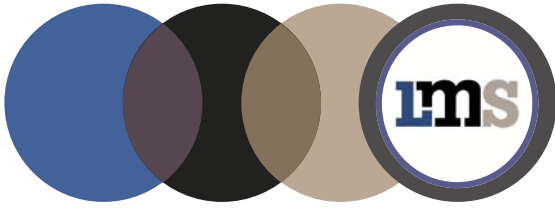
"It's important to note that heavily soiled areas of any community will repeatedly attract stray dogs and other animals," Barasch adds. "These areas should be routinely cleaned of all pet waste, disinfected if needed and have an organic odor eliminator applied to reduce the attraction to dogs."

### Enforce Wisely

Rule enforcement can be complicated, and the best outcome is that people comply without strained relationships. If a pet is disturbing the peace, for example, the first step should be a friendly conversation neighbor-to-neighbor, rather than a complaint letter issued. A Board may want to handle things differently if a pet slipped its leash one day, versus the owner who lets the dog run every day off their leash. A graduated system of reminders, warning letters and fines are a common-sense solution.

Property Managers cannot be everywhere in the community 24x7, so they need your help to identify problems. The result is a more harmonious Association where pet lovers can enjoy themselves without inconveniencing those who don't have furry friends.





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## CONCEALED CARRY / GUN FREE ZONE

While the debate about gun laws has gained nationwide prominence, Board Members may wonder whether they should be addressing the topic within their communities. Some communities have implemented gun restrictions successfully, but the issue can become complicated, and people are passionate about their gun law positions.

For these reasons, some Boards have decided to leave well enough alone. If your Board wishes to regulate gun carrying, here four items you should include in your resolution, from Association law experts at Kovitz Shifrin Nesbit:

1. Residents of the Association are permitted to possess firearms in their units consistent with statutes and ordinances of the State of Illinois.

2. Residents and guests of residents of the Association are permitted to carry, in a concealed fashion, firearms for ingress and egress to/from units at the Association.

3. Firearms are otherwise specifically prohibited at the Association meetings or any other formal Association gathering anywhere in the building or common areas.

4. Upon adoption of this rule, a sign incorporating the foregoing shall be placed conspicuously at each entrance to the building.

For complete wording of a firearms resolution, contact your Property Manager.

## NEW COMMUNITIES

We would like to welcome the following communities!

LINCOLN PARK 2550 HOA  
Chicago



SOMERSET OF CRYSTAL LAKE  
Crystal Lake

