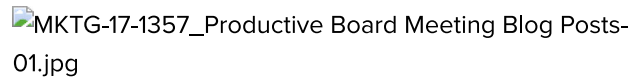




Use These Three Words to Ensure Productive Board Meetings

DEAN DRISCOLL, CMCA, AMS



You initially joined the Board because you care for your community and have a vision for where you see things headed in the coming years— you want to make a real difference.

But somewhere along the way, things became difficult. Your monthly board meetings have turned into *bored* meetings, mainly because you can't seem to get things done. You're not getting necessary information to make key decisions and your neighbor down the street uses each meeting as a forum for reporting on what his neighbors are doing.

It's time for a reset. Use the three tips below to create structure, engagement and progress in your community association board meetings.

Here's the trick to running your board meetings like a PRO:

PREPAREDNESS

In an effort to make informed decisions, you should be receiving meeting materials well in advance of the board meeting. Ensure that your community manager is providing you with meeting packets in advance so that you have the opportunity to review and ask questions prior to board meetings. Meeting minutes should include a list of action items to drive accountability and to help everyone understand the status of each active project. Take the time to review that information in advance and ask questions prior to the meeting so you're fully informed.

READINESS

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People's homes are their most important investment. Why? Because they live in them and there is a certain amount of emotion attached to that. While you have been elected to make decisions on behalf of the membership in the daily operation of the community, you will no doubt at some point be challenged by the membership. Remember, your goal is to make the best decision that you can on behalf of the community. Others may not see it that way and may decide a board meeting is the best venue to recruit other attendees to jump on the bandwagon. First and foremost, remember that it is a board meeting and you are there to conduct business. It is also important that you gain an understanding of your members concerns. Many boards designate time for an "Open Forum" at the beginning or the end of the meeting to listen to member concerns.

ORGANIZATION

Having the Board and the Manager all on the same page gives the membership in attendance a feeling of cohesion. A tight agenda is essential to ensure that meetings are not way-laid and the agenda items are being addressed. As a volunteer, the last thing you need is to be sitting at a Board meeting at 10:00 p.m. Stick to the agenda and assure the members who took time out of their schedules to attend that they will be heard.

As a board member, meetings are a necessary part of making sure your community runs smoothly and if you've experienced meetings that are proving to be more of a hassle than a help to you and your community, the beginning of the year is the perfect time to hit the reset button and implement new strategies to stay on track and give you and your board a renewed sense of purpose and accomplishment.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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