



5 Things to Do If You Want to Be an Outstanding HOA Board Member



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By **Marisa Highsmith, CMCA, AMS, PCAM** (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/marisa-highsmith-45b522b2>)

Congratulations! You have accepted a position as a member of your community association Board of Directors. Maybe you wanted to sit on the Board because you feel there is business to be done and you are the one to do it. Perhaps you are serving on the Board because someone else in the organization thought you were the person for the job. Regardless of the reason you are serving, the fact remains that you accepted the position, so let's get started on learning some tips on how to make this experience outstanding!

- **Before anything else, take time to read the legal documents that govern your Association,** such as the Articles of Incorporation, Covenants/Declarations, and Bylaws. These documents can be overwhelming for those of us that didn't go to law school, but take time to read them anyway. Nestled in all that legalese you'll find the duties to which you have been assigned. Do you have easements the Association maintains? What are the boundaries for your landscaper? Does the HOA **clean those gutters on the townhomes** (<https://cihost.uberflip.com/five-little-known-consequences-of-not-cleaning-your-gutters>) or are the owners responsible for that? Those answers and much more are usually in there!

Be aware there are also local and federal laws and ordinances you should know to ensure that you are compliant while conducting the business of your Association. Reading up will make you a more knowledgeable board member and will help you quickly resolve many of the issues that lie ahead.

- **Open your mind to others' views and be aware of your personal agenda.** Your association is comprised of other members and you are charged with **making decisions and spending funds on their behalf** (<https://associaonline.com/management-services/finance-accounting>). You will undoubtedly be tasked with something that goes against your personal preference, but is best for the community as a whole. Outstanding Board members are able to recognize when this occurs and they adjust their frame of thought accordingly.
- **Always be prepared!** You are not just a body in a seat. You have the authority to make decisions both large and small. Your manager most likely prepares information for your review prior to the Board meeting. Please read it. **Reviewing agendas, financials, and other pertinent information** (<https://cihost.uberflip.com/9-essential-items-your-hoa-board-should-review-each-year>) allows you to ask questions before the meeting and come informed ready to make decisions. The Board meeting is the place where business occurs. Research happens in preparation for the decisions *prior to the meeting* which allows for conversation to be constructive and productive. When Boards are prepared, meetings flow well and action items get checked off the list which will make you one prepared, outstanding Board member.
- **Record the actions of your meeting appropriately.** It's said time and time again that meeting minutes are not called "meeting hours" for a reason. **Record decisions of the Board** (<https://associaonline.com/management-services/association-management>), but leave the discussion and drama in the room and off the paper.
- **Don't forget to show up to the Board Meeting.** When someone prepares for a meeting with the expectation quorum will be met and business will occur and members of the Board don't communicate scheduling conflicts beforehand, it reflects a lack of commitment to the Board or to the Association and the owners that live in your community and can cause **distrust between board members** (<https://cihost.uberflip.com/6-ways-to-change-the-attitude-of->

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apathy-in-your-community). It can also delay very important, time-sensitive decisions.

Outstanding Board members are on time, prepared and reliable.

There are many skills-related tips to assist Boards in making great decisions (and I'll share those in future posts), but these minor manners are important too. Follow these quick tips and be assured you are putting your best foot forward towards **becoming an outstanding Board member** (<https://cihost.uberflip.com/the-secret-to-being-the-best-board-member-you-can-be-think-like-a-hobbit>). Your fellow Board members and your Association will thank you.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Let Marisa help you strengthen your community association board!

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Associa OnCall
(<https://www.associaonline.com/maintenance-services>)

Associations Insurance Agency, Inc. (AIAI)
(<http://www.associationsinsuranceagency.com/>)

Community Archives
(<http://www.communityarchives.com/>)

First National Bank of Kemp
(<https://www.fnbkemp.com/>)

HOA Collection Services (HCS)
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