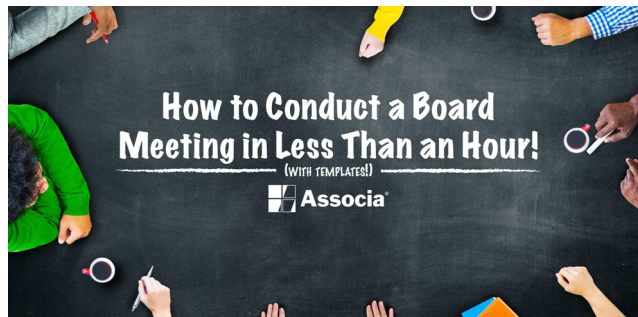




Done by Dinner: How to Conduct a (Meaningful) Board Meeting in Under an Hour (with Downloadable Templates!)

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Have you ever asked a board member about the perks of serving on their homeowners association board? Chances are they didn't boast about the awesome pay, or the efficient board meetings attended by all Type-A board members in which everyone agrees and resolution is quickly proposed and/or accepted.

The reality of being a board member is quite different from the above scenario, because serving on an association board is a voluntary endeavor by community members and the only thing board members are guaranteed to have in common is a desire for a well-run community (with albeit differing ideas on how to make it so).

When you consider that association board members are volunteers who have full lives and careers outside of their community, it's easy to see why one of the most important things a board can do is run **efficient board meetings** (<http://go.associaonline.com/protocols>).
(<http://go.associaonline.com/protocols>)

From the avoidable five-minute meetings to death-by-discussion five-hour meetings, follow these 7 tips for quick, efficient board meetings that will have you home in time for Aunt Bessie's chicken pot pie! (<http://go.associaonline.com/protocols>) I've also included templates to help keep board meetings on track (<http://go.associaonline.com/protocols>). (<http://go.associaonline.com/protocols>)

1. Board meetings are meant for directed discussion, appointed action, and meaningful motions. Anything above, below or in-between can be dealt with at another time. If there is no movement in discussion in any which direction, table the motion and move on. **(Brush up on parliamentary procedure with this free chart. (<http://go.associaonline.com/protocols>))**
2. A well-organized agenda includes: old business, new business, a treasurer's report (to review and approve the previous month's financials), committee reports, a review of action items, and open homeowner forum (the requirements for this forum may vary depending on the state and governing documents).
3. Each item on the agenda should have an assigned time frame. If old business is assigned 10 minutes and begins to run into the 20-minute territory, it is time to wrap it up.
4. At the meeting, the committee chairs only need to discuss items that need a vote from the board or high level topics – all members of each committee do not need to attend and speak at every meeting.
5. At the end of the board meeting action items should be reviewed and agreed upon in order to ensure that each member is clear of their expected roles and responsibilities. For example: President Bob agreed to contact the Landscaping Committee about the upcoming installation of the annuals and contact the Infrastructure Committee about the backflow preventer inspections. Community Manager Georgina will prepare a Request for Proposal for the clubhouse painting project by the next board meeting. **(Download the Board Meeting Action Item template (<http://go.associaonline.com/protocols>)).**
6. Invite homeowners to attend and to speak at the end (or beginning) of the meeting, but limit this time to 3 minutes per person or request that all homeowner questions/comments be submitted in advance so that the board can better address them at the meeting. If this causes issues, create a board meeting code of conduct and publish to the membership for review and adoption.

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7. Stick to the agenda at all times and do not fall victim to the two biggest meeting killers – social hour soirees, and tangent parties.

Despite their nonprofit status and strong volunteer base, an HOA should be run like a professional business. The board meeting should fall in line accordingly and have a clear and direct purpose.

Abraham Lincoln said, “If I had six hours to chop down a tree, I’d spend the first four hours sharpening the axe.” Therefore, if you’re looking forward to Taco Tuesday, keep in mind that effective and efficient meetings start with planning and end with adherence to that plan. Board meetings, nay all meetings, can be productive *and* precise, as long as those running the meetings do the same.

Save time, stay organized and get more done for your community with Associa's Board Meeting Pro tools. This free kit includes templates for creating HOA board meeting agendas, action item lists and meeting minutes, plus a parliamentary procedure chart to ensure your board meetings run smoothly.

[Download Board Meeting Pro Tools](http://go.associaonline.com/prottools)

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