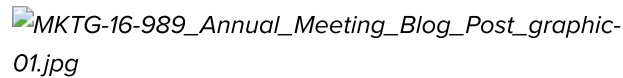




How to Solve the Biggest Problem with Annual Meetings

MELISSA MERRITT-DARDEN ([HTTPS://HUB.ASSOCIAONLINE.COM/AUTHORS/MELISSA-MERRITT-DARDEN](https://hub.associaonline.com/authors/melissa-merritt-darden))



Does your board have trouble with homeowner attendance at your annual board meeting? You're not alone! Here's one homeowner's account of poor annual meeting attendance and tips to improve attendance and participation at your next meeting.

Our state statutes require that if quorum is not reached at the first meeting, we must call another meeting at which time the quorum will be cut in half and then each subsequent meeting the quorum is halved again until it is finally met. We have 600 homeowners and have held up to three, sometimes four, annual meetings to meet the guidelines only to review the budget and vote on the new board members. The meeting notices take time, holding the meeting at the library costs money, and doing this multiple times is not an efficient way to run a business in my experience. I am a homeowner's association board member and every year we hold our annual meeting the first Wednesday of December. Our management company helps us along with the mailing to the members and putting together the meeting packet but we never reach quorum – ever! We've tried a few things like holding door prizes or asking the pool company to sponsor a raffle, but each year we fall short of 20%.

We've spoken with our attorney and we do not wish to amend our Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions to change our quorum to a lower amount as it would require a vote of 2/3rds of the homeowners – the same homeowners that are not attending the annual meeting!

Do you have any suggestions on improving our attendance so that we can move forward with this one meeting each year?

Dear reader,

Let's be honest with each other from the start – annual homeowners association meetings are about as popular as annual tax time. It's a necessary evil according to most. Many homeowners do not want to hear from their HOA (or the HOA's management company) unless it's absolutely necessary or a social event is forthcoming.

Let us know!
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Pool is about to open? Great, we'll see you there! Fall Festival at the clubhouse? Awesome, how do we get tickets? Annual meeting outside the community that I doubt will have any impact on me personally? No thanks.

Every item in the annual meeting is important, no doubt about it, but until a homeowner has experienced it they may not appreciate the value of the meeting. There are certain features that you will certainly be required to cover that may not be exciting to everyone – board member voting, projects completed, annual budget and dues information, etc. As a board member, there are two options available: try to make the annual meeting more than a recap of what happened the previous year and/or personalize the experience.

Here are some ideas to improve attendance:

1. **GET VISUAL:** Make a video highlighting all of the projects completed throughout the year with background inspirational music. Get interviews from key volunteers and discuss cost savings the board has achieved for the community.
2. **BOOK IT:** Provide a few booklets to hand out before and after the meeting that showcase your preventative maintenance strategy and what was accomplished by the people included in the program.
3. **CAUSE A SCENE:** Are your homeowners interested in something specific like art, dance, wine tastings, or local charities? Ask the local girl or boy scouts to present at the meeting (or sell cookies!), or display work from an up-and-coming artist. Offer wine tasting tickets as a raffle option. Host a blood drive.

Want more? Download our latest eBook: 7 Clever Ideas to Increase Attendance and Participation at Your Annual Board Meeting. (<http://bit.ly/2dq2hDX>)

You mentioned a quorum of 20%. If you have 600 homeowners, it means that a minimum of 120 homeowners need to show up in order for the meeting to be valid and move forward with any actions. I'm guessing that your clubhouse is not large enough to accommodate a function of this size. (If it is, I would suggest holding meetings at the clubhouse to cut back on monies spent reserving a room at the library.) Ask members within the community if they have any connections that offer free meeting space to groups such as HOAs. Ask your community association manager to recommend other nearby facilities that other communities use as a free service or at a discounted rate.

Ultimately yes, you want to improve attendance so that quorum is reached, the budget is ratified, and the new board members are appropriately voted in. However, it's also important that homeowners appreciate why they live in a homeowners association in the first place. The annual meeting is an often overlooked way to achieve all of these goals.

Let us know!
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Confucius wrote, “I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.” Once homeowners attend the annual meeting, they’ll understand, but be prepared to think outside the box to help them get there.

GET HOMEOWNERS EXCITED ABOUT THE ANNUAL BOARD MEETING!

Discover seven ways to transform your annual board meeting to an event the whole community will enjoy with our new ebook, 7 Clever Ideas to Boost Attendance and Participation at Your Annual Meeting.

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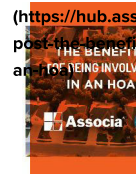
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