

Membership Committee Guidance

This guidance document exists solely to convey the benefit of prior experience to new committee members and to promote transparency in how the HOA functions. **This guidance is not binding on the committee or on anyone else.** Last updated November 2021 by Chris Allen.

Bylaw 3.11.10 establishes the Membership Committee (“Committee”) as a standing committee of the HOA. Like all standing committees, the Chair of the Committee must be a Director.

Duties

The Committee is responsible for communication between the HOA’s Board of Directors and the homeowners. This involves the following key activities:

1. Identifying new homeowners and welcoming them into the HOA.
2. Maintaining the HOA’s website to keep the homeowners informed of HOA business.
3. Posting signs for each month’s Board meeting showing the agenda.
4. Preparing newsletters to mail to homeowners in combination with invoices.
5. Organizing annual balloting to elect the seven HOA Directors.
6. Presenting an annual report of committee activity at the HOA’s Annual Meeting.
7. Maintain and update this guidance document to assist the Committee’s members, now and in the future, in performing their role as designated in the Bylaws.

Welcoming New Homeowners

The accounting firm hired by the HOA to collect assessments also provides the Committee with the names of new homeowners, which they obtain from real-estate escrow requests. When a new homeowner is identified, someone on the Committee should welcome them in person, by phone, or by mail. Importantly, this welcome letter should point them to the HOA’s website for more information and ask for their email address, if not already supplied.

Maintaining the Website

At the November 2018 Board meeting, it was agreed that the Committee can make minor changes to the website as necessary to keep it fresh and up-to-date without submitting every detail to the Board for approval. Major alterations, like those relating to governance documents, should be approved by the Board.

The website is maintained on a volunteer basis by Sharon Costello. It works best if the Committee compiles a list of items that need to be updated and send them to her once a week, rather than sending them piecemeal as they arise.

The format for documents on the website depends on their primary purpose. Guidance documents such as this one, which are updated frequently, should be kept in an easily editable

format such as Word or HTML. Documents that are primarily archival should be kept as PDF files to ensure future compatibility. Documents that are designed to be referenced routinely from mobile devices should be kept in HTML format for ease of reading on small screens.

Posting Signs

The neighborhood has two road entrances, each marked by a stone monument. It is customary to post the agenda of upcoming Board meetings at each of these entrances prior to each meeting (the Bylaws require posting 4 days in advance). The signs should be removed promptly after the meeting (typically, the next morning).

The HOA has two signposts that were built to facilitate posting of agendas. They are kept by someone on the Committee, who puts them up when needed and takes them down for safekeeping. The sign can be propped against the monument.

Traditionally, about a dozen copies of the agenda were provided at each sign. However, as more homeowners authorize use of their email address, the number of hardcopies required has declined.

There is no requirement to post agendas of Emergency Sessions and doing so creates confusion. Executive Sessions must be posted 2 days in advance, but since these are normally held right after regular monthly meetings, no separate posting is required if the agenda for the regular meeting notes the possibility of the board meeting in Executive Session afterward.

Preparing Newsletters

The HOA typically distributes a newsletter to Members at least twice a year in conjunction with the mailing of invoices for fees. These should be limited to a single sheet to avoid extra postage costs. The content varies from issue to issue, but a few items are frequently included:

1. Changes in Directors, Officers, and Committee Chairs.
2. Highlight the HOA's website address as a resource for HOA information.
3. A reminder to submit a Request for Architectural Improvement when making any change to a home's exterior or landscaping.
4. Update on recent slope improvements.
5. Update on the HOA's financial status.
6. Justification for any fee increase reflected in the enclosed invoice.

Annual Balloting

The Committee should ask the Board of Directors at the May meeting to approve solicitation of the general Membership to find those who are interested in serving on the Board.

In June of each year, a secret (two-envelope) ballot with a list of Members interested in serving on the Board, with a paragraph they supply about themselves, is mailed by the HOA to all Members at their address of record, with instructions to vote for up to as many seats as will be

filled in that election. The ballot language should be approved by the Board in advance. The ballots are collected and delivered to the Committee for counting at the Annual Meeting. At the conclusion of that meeting, the sitting President will announce the results of the election.

If a vacancy occurs between general elections, the Committee will solicit candidates for presentation to the Board of Directors, who select a replacement by majority vote.

Reporting and Recordkeeping

1. At each monthly Board meeting, disclose any new Owners and report welcome-letter deliveries.
2. Keep the Board informed about website modifications and obtain approval for substantive changes.
3. Upload the minutes of each meeting to the website, after they have been formally approved by a vote of the Board of Directors. PDF format is preferred.
4. Make sure that any changes to governing documents approved by the Board are promptly posted on the website and replaced versions are archived.