

SO YOU'RE ON THE BOARD...NOW WHAT?

You took the plunge! You volunteered, put your name on the ballot, and were elected. After the anticipation, the vote, and the satisfaction of being elected subside, you may realize that you are not exactly sure what to do as a board member. Outlined below are a few helpful hints and tips which will make your transition into the world of association governance smooth.

Get to know your community.

No matter your tenure in the community, long or short, there are quirks, issues, and concerns you may or may not be aware of prior to joining the board. Don't let quirky issues scare you away. Take the time to get to know your neighbors, their concerns, and the community. Take the time to research and educate yourself. Read the governing documents, take classes that are offered and create an open, accessible, and transparent board which is working towards the best interest of the community.

Utilize your strengths.

You will have the opportunity to work with vendors, managers, other board members, and community members. Let your fellow board members know what your strengths are and utilize them, whether it is crunching numbers, communicating with others, or resolving disputes. You will be most beneficial to the board and community when working in a capacity that suits you and when you are doing something you enjoy. Finally, like anything in life, neither you nor the board can please every member in the community. Therefore, in addition to utilizing your individual strengths, you should strive for diplomacy in all interactions during your terms, both with owners and other board members.



Your association

manager is a valuable asset.

The association manager is a professional hired by the board to assist and guide the board and the community. The association manager will typically handle the day to day concerns of the association. An association manager may bring years of experience and may be able to offer valuable advice. While the board is the final decision maker, a board should never discount a manager's advice and should trust that the manager will carry out the policies and decisions of the board on a daily basis.

Your Fiduciary duty...what is it?

While acting as a member of the board, you have a **fiduciary duty** to the members of the association. While this may seem daunting, in plain English, a fiduciary duty is nothing more than:

- A duty to act in good faith (i.e. to act without bad intentions)
- To act in the best interests of the association (which is not always in the best interest of yourself)
- To act prudently (being informed before taking action and exercising sound judgment).

Now that you have dipped your toes in the swimming pool of association supervision, you may be wondering, "What next?" Now it's time to start governing. This includes the following, which by no means is a comprehensive list:

- Setting policy, making decisions, and guiding the community
- Setting a budget

- Determining how funds are spent
- Contracting with vendors for work in the community (landscaping, maintenance, snow removal, repairs) and coordinating such work
- Enforcing the [covenants](#), rules, and regulations
- Employing an accountant, attorney, or other professionals as necessary, to assist with the management of the community.