



#302 HOA Homefront – HOA Director’s New Year Resolutions

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To better begin the new year, many of us make resolutions. This four-part series will suggest resolutions for association directors, homeowners, managers and service providers.

As an HOA director, I resolve to:

ALWAYS:

- Follow the Golden Rule

REBOOT MY ATTITUDE:

- I don’t control my neighbors, I serve them. An attitude of service will help me to be less defensive and stressed when neighbors challenge or criticize board decisions.
- Advocate our board follows the law and governing documents, spends money wisely and properly preserves and maintains community assets, while also being mindful of the board’s relationship with our HOA community. We will balance the legal, financial, property and community considerations in our decisions.
- Remember that my position as a volunteer is different than my work. Unlike at work, we cannot fire our HOA neighbors.
- Be aware that not all neighbors know their rights and responsibilities under the law and governing documents, and I will be patient and willing to explain the rules and decisions.

BE KNOWLEDGEABLE:

- Review our governing documents (CC&Rs, bylaws and rules).
- Review financial reports on budget, reserves, expenditures and delinquencies.
- Understand the Business Judgment Rule, and always make sure the board has sufficient basis for each decision.
- Encourage my board colleagues to join a Community Associations Institute Chapter, and take advantage of the written materials, seminars and classes CAI offers to volunteers.

IMPROVE BOARD MEETINGS:

- Help to limit our open board meetings to at most 2 hours, with a goal of an average meeting length of 90 minutes.
- Arrive at meetings prepared, having reviewed the agenda and board packet.

- Listen attentively during Open Forum without interrupting and give my neighbors the same level of courtesy and attentiveness which I expect from them during the board deliberations.
- Stay on topic during discussions.
- Meet in closed sessions only when clearly necessary and authorized by the Open Meeting Act.

TEAMWORK:

- Remember that my power as a director is the ability to vote. Even the president is only one vote. I won't be a "Lone Ranger" but will be a team player.
- I will encourage directors to speak their minds. I won't be insulted because a director disagrees with me.
- If I disagree with my colleagues, I will try to convince them of my point of view. If the board votes against my position, I will support the board's decision, even though I disagree.
- I will let the manager manage. I will not direct management (the board directs management) or vendors (our manager directs vendors).

COMMUNITY BUILDING:

- Be as open as possible. When a member asks for information or documents, I will first ask "why not?" rather than "must we?"
- Encourage the use of committees, to share workload and provide members opportunities for involvement.
- Communicate better and more frequently with our neighbors (members) with newsletters, web page updates, e-mails and/or bulletins.
- Confirm our manager holds a professional designation from an organization such as CAI and can properly call themselves a California "Certified Common Interest Development Manager."
- Try to work out disputes with members before "going legal". We can always call the HOA attorney next if our efforts fail.

LAST:

- Follow the Golden Rule