



#329 HOA Homefront – Surefire Steps to Guarantee Board Meetings Will Be Longer

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If board service is not difficult enough, you can crank it up a notch by making board meetings much longer. If people aren't dozing by meeting's end and if you're done after 90 minutes you haven't tried hard enough. Follow these steps to increase your chances.

Do not plan ahead – include everything you can think of on the agenda. Make sure you pack multiple major issues in simultaneously - don't wait for the next meeting.

Avoid reading the board packet (if ever) until you arrive at the meeting. Ask lots of questions about things that are in the packet or in reports attached to the packets – that way you can prove that you did not prepare and make the whole board wait while you catch up.

Open forum remarks should be unlimited. Some HOAs have 3 minutes per speaker limits. Let people talk as much as they want. [That will give you time to read your board packet.]

Never use consent calendars. Everything must be a separate motion and discussed, no matter how minor, routine, or non-controversial.

If other directors disagree with you, keep talking - you might wear them down. Sometimes if you drone on long enough, people will occasionally back off their positions and you can delay a board vote... again and again.

Repetition is great. Repetitious arguments or revisiting previous decisions lengthens meetings. If it's worth saying once, it might be worth saying many times. If it's worth saying once, it might be worth saying many times. It's worth saying once...

Push for unanimous votes and complete consensus on everything, so often you'll need to take extra time to wear down dissenting directors.

Avoid calm respectful speech. Get personal. A few insults now and then helps to derail the board for a while (and maybe makes things more lively for the audience). Look for implied or possibly veiled insults as much as possible, and make sure to defend yourself. Your pride must be defended at all times.

Never call for the question.

Let the audience participate- always. Even though the members observing the meeting cannot vote on board items, and have not reviewed the board packet, let them talk all they want. [That gives you time to check your email.]

Use agendas as a suggestion, not a road map. Sure, maybe the law requires you stick to the posted agenda, but just let the flow of discussion go where it will. Go with the flow, you'll get back to the agenda eventually – maybe next meeting.

Remember, every board decision is equally important, and deserves equal discussion. There is no such thing as a simple decision. Talk about everything. The members want to hear your voice on each motion, no matter how large or small it is.

Always rehash committee reports and recommendations. Committee work is fun, so why not just ignore the report and revisit the subject? Why simply trust the committee assigned to study a topic and make recommendations? Revisiting the committee's conclusions will remind the committee who is the boss, with the extra benefit of indicating that the boss doesn't respect or trust their work.

Boards which scrupulously follow these tips can, with some effort, attain the holy grail of long board meetings – midnight!