



Why I Choose to Serve

by Paul Burkett

My multiple terms as a director on a community association board has been rewarding, challenging and frustrating. The board faced both positive community enhancement activities and negative enforcement activities. However, my collective experience remains one that I would not avoid and I look forward to my remaining eighteen months on the current Board.

The key in my mind to being a successful board director was for me to remember that I was serving because I cared about the community and not because I have a hidden agenda. As a Director and the current President of the ArrowCreek Homeowners Association board, I accept and recognize that I have a fiduciary responsibility to the community. I must do everything in my power to protect, preserve and enhance the value of property within our community. I know as a director that I must focus on evaluating, modifying and instituting community policies and procedures and avoid micromanagement tendencies. As a director, I must allow both community staff and the community manager to manage our association. I must remember that we have a partnership to enhance the value of the community.

Additionally, ArrowCreek has allowed me to serve as the president of our board that further focuses the challenges concerning working with a volunteer board. The challenge of creating productive board and executive meetings is ongoing. As the president I have worked with staff and the community manager to focus the board on achieving the annual goals that have been communicated to the community. In our situation ArrowCreek has seven (7) significant objectives for 2007 that will require a focused effort by the ArrowCreek board. At ArrowCreek the board reviews these objectives at every board and executive session during 2007. Several of these objectives focus on community betterments, but several of these objectives are not as popular.

The ArrowCreek board focuses on improving community communications through the use of newsletters, e-mail blasts, special bulletins and establishing a twenty-four hour response goal concerning questions and complaints for community members. The ArrowCreek board works hard to publicize the association's accomplishments and recognize members for their contributions to the community. The board recognizes that this remains an ongoing challenge. Ongoing community communications can never be minimized. It is a commitment to excellence.

As president of the association, I must focus the board on the bigger issues facing the community and avoid the micromanagement tendencies that require responses from community staff and the community manager. I work to focus the board on the monthly financial reports, annual reserve studies, monthly budget to actual, management evaluations, vendor bids, board policies, community complaints, compliance with the Nevada Revised Statutes Section 116 and reviewing policy recommendations from the

Architectural Design Review Committee, Safety Committee and the Finance Committee. During the board's executive sessions, I work with my fellow directors to properly enforce the CC&Rs and policies and procedures of the community. We constantly evaluate the rules of the community to determine that they are specific and reasonable. We always involve the community in open meetings when established ongoing Board Budget Workshops, Board Reserve Study Workshops, and Traffic Enforcement Workshops to involve and inform the community.

Lastly, as the president I work with the board to develop a strong and fiscally responsible budget for the community. The constant evaluation of the current Operating Budget and the current Reserve Fund Budget occurs at each board meeting and the board orders adjustments where necessary. As the president, I follow up on the implementation of those adjustments. The development of the 2008 budget has started for ArrowCreek. The Finance Committee charter, objectives and volunteer membership currently is under review by the board of directors. The board published the 2008 Board Budget Workshops. The Board plans to present the final 2008 Board Operating Budget and Reserve Fund Budget to the community by October of 2007 for final approval by the board in November. Establishing a clear and exact schedule for the budget process is an important responsibility of the board.

In writing this article, I developed a strong appreciation for the work that all community association boards face throughout the state. I know that future boards must overcome community apathy and develop enthusiastic future board members. Being a volunteer member of an HOA board is rewarding and as a member you can make a difference.

Please recognize that our long term goal is to enhance and maintain the property values of our respective communities. Please accept the challenge in your community.

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