



## Fairways of Sherrill Park Homeowners Association UNDERSTANDING THE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION CONCEPT

To be effective, a homeowners association needs a strong board of directors that understands its role and pursues it with passion and a concise mission in mind. The following outline provides an overview of board roles and responsibilities.

To form an effective board, directors must have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the association, its history and what is to be accomplished. Every homeowner association should have responsibility for its assets as well as its operation in accordance with standards established by state and federal law, local ordinances, and the governing documents upon which the entity itself was created. To the extent that the association has such authority and control, it is the board of directors that makes certain these responsibilities are fulfilled.

The homeowners association is the cornerstone of a planned residential community. It brings continuity and order to the community, it preserves the architectural integrity and it maintains the common elements. Properly run, the association promotes the concept of “community” and contributes to the protection of the neighborhood's property values.

In many cases, it collectively makes available recreational and other facilities that might not otherwise be affordable or available to homeowners and residents on an individual basis.

Deed-initiated homeowners associations have become an essential part of the overall concept of residential property ownership in today's marketplace. Purchase of a home or lot often brings with it mandatory membership in an association which then provides the structure for operation and management of the residential development. With HOA membership comes certain maintenance obligations, financial responsibilities, and a commitment to abide by use restrictions and other rules of the association. To a degree, it necessitates individual conformity for the good of the whole.

The association's responsibilities may be limited to basic maintenance functions or they may be expanded to include sophisticated and extensive upkeep of the property as well as delivery of special services to individual homes (e.g. back door trash pickup). To be successful, its officers and directors must uniformly and fairly govern the community, and it must have a reasonable level of participation by each of its members over time.

### **Board of Directors**

The association has responsibility for its common elements as well as the management and operation of the association's business affairs, all in accordance with standards established by the governing documents\* created when the community was first developed. To the extent that an association has such authority and control, it is its board of directors that carries out these duties and responsibilities.

Members of the board of directors of an association serve without compensation unless the bylaws of the association provide to the contrary. The board's authority includes all of the powers and duties enumerated in general law, as long as these powers are not inconsistent with the provisions of the documents governing the association.

\* Articles of Incorporation, CE&Rs and Bylaws

## **Fiduciary Relationship and Responsibility**

The members of the board of directors and each officer of the association have a fiduciary relationship with the members of the association. This fiduciary relationship imposes obligations of trust and confidence in favor of the corporation and its members. It requires the members of the board to act in good faith and in the best interests of the members of the association. It means that board members must exercise due care and diligence when acting for the community, and it requires them to act within the scope of their authority.

The fact that the association is a not-for-profit corporation, or that the members of the board are volunteers and unpaid, does not relieve them from the high standards of trust and responsibility that the fiduciary relationship requires. When a member accepts a position on the board of directors, he or she is presumed to have knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of a board member. Board members cannot be excused from improper action on the grounds of ignorance or inexperience and liability of board members for negligence and mismanagement exists in favor of the association and the property owners.

Each board member must recognize the fiduciary relationship and the responsibilities that the board has to the association and each of its members. The board's duties must be performed with the care and responsibility that an ordinary prudent person would exercise under similar circumstances, and the ultimate responsibilities of these unique positions cannot be delegated to a manager, a management company or other third party.

### **A Recap of the Board Member's Role:**

Acting through the board as a whole, a board member should:

- Enforce the documents
- Establish sound fiscal policies and maintain accurate records
- Develop a workable budget, keeping in mind the needs, requirements and expectations of the community
- Establish reserve funds
- Act on budget items and determine dues/assessment rates
- Collect dues/assessments
- Establish, publicize, and enforce rules and penalties
- Authorize legal action against owners who do not comply with the rules
- Review local laws before passing rules or sending bylaws to membership for approval
- Appoint committees and delegate authority to them
- Select an attorney, insurance agent and other professionals for the association
- Provide adequate insurance coverage, as required by the bylaws and local governmental agencies
- Inform board members of all business items that require their vote
- Inform members of important board decisions and transactions
- See that the association is protected for the acts of all parties with fiscal responsibilities
- Attend and participate at meetings

Operating a homeowner association carries with it many of the very same duties and responsibilities as overseeing any other business. Serving as a board member is a valuable and rewarding experience that should be undertaken by those who see it as an opportunity to serve their fellow neighbors while protecting and enhancing the assets of the community. It is serious business, but also a task worth doing well in order to safeguard the investments of all.



**Fairways of Sherrill Park**  
**BOARD MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS**

As a Board of Directors member, you need to be aware that more is expected of those in leadership roles. Please review the following statements. Signing this Code of Ethics, while not required, can demonstrate your commitment to honest Board service.

As a member of this Board, I will:

- Be committed to fulfilling the mission and vision of the Fairways of Sherrill Park HOA.
- Keep all confidential Board information, confidential.
- Focus my efforts on the Fairways of Sherrill Park HOA and not my personal goals.
- Serve on a committee and/or task force in a leadership capacity.
- Refrain from using my service on this Board for my own personal advantage or for the advantage of my friends or associates.
- Respect and support the majority decisions of the Board.
- Immediately disclose to the Board any perceived or real conflict of interest as soon as I have knowledge of the potential conflict.
- Approach all Board issues with an open mind, prepared to make the best decisions for everyone involved.
- Do nothing to violate the trust of those who elected or appointed me to the Board or of those we serve.
- Never exercise authority as a Board member except when acting in a Board meeting or as I am delegated by the Board or its President.
- Consider myself a trustee of this organization and do my best to ensure that it is well maintained, financially secure, growing and always operating within the best interest of those we serve.

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BOARD MEMBER NAME

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BOARD MEMBER SIGNATURE

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DATE